A History of Nebraska Methodism

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A HISTORY

OF

Nebraska Methodism

FIRST HALF-CENTURY

1854-1904

By

REV. DAVID MARQUETTE, D. D.

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PREFACE.

THIRTY-FOUR years ago, Dr. W. B. Slaughter was selected as Conference Historian. He fully intended to write a history and sent out circular letters calling for the requisite information, but so few responded that he became discouraged and abandoned the undertaking. Some fifteen years ago Dr. Maxfield sent out circular letters with the same object in view, but failed to get enough data to justify him in going on with the work. It is a matter of very great regret indeed that one or the other of these men should not have completed this important task. Besides being far better qualified for the work than the author, they were then in possession of many sources of information that have since passed beyond our reach.

These facts show that Nebraska Methodism has long felt the need of such a history. This desire found further expression in the organization of Conference Historical Societies, and more recently in the organization, by the concurrent action of all the Conferences, of the Methodist Historical Society of Nebraska, and the appointment of a man to collect and care for material. It took still more definite form when at a meeting of the

State Methodist Historical Society, in 1902, the author was requested to prepare such a history. As corresponding secretary of the society I had already spent more than a year collecting material and had made a study of this material for a sketch of our history for the J. Sterling Morton History of Nebraska, now being published.

I accepted the task with fear and trembling, having even then some conception of its magnitude and a keen sense of inadequacy, but with a conviction that some one ought at once to perform that service. I have found the undertaking much larger and the difficulties greater than I anticipated. I can only say that for three years, with much pleasure and profit, I have wrought diligently at the task. That the result is satisfactory to myself, or will be above just criticism by others, I do not claim. But such as it is, I send it forth on its mission, praying that God may use it for good notwithstanding its defects.

Several plans presented themselves, either of which I might have pursued. I might have taken each charge in order and written a history of that charge for the entire time of its existence, and printed these four hundred separate histories in a single volume; or I might have given a biographical sketch of each of the more than eight hundred preachers who have at some time wrought in the field, together with hundreds of worthy laymen. But neither of these plans seemed best nor practicable. My plan has been to give a picture of the movement as a whole, by which Nebraska Methodism has become what

it is and done what it has, treating in greater fullness of detail the earlier periods when the Church was in the making. I have used such details in biography and events as seemed best suited to this purpose. I may not have done justice to every one and I may have overestimated some and even overlooked men and events that should have been mentioned. But I have not intentionally done so.

It was originally my plan to devote about two hundred pages to the history and one hundred pages to biographical sketches. But I found the history and the biography so inextricably mingled, the history being in large measure but the biography of the workers, and the biography constituting so much of the history, that I have not tried to separate them. In a few typical cases, like Adriance, Wells, and Charles, I have used some of their biography as part of the history, they telling their own story and illustrating some phase of the work.

Concerning portraits, I have declined to have any one pay for their cuts, bearing this expense myself. My purpose has been to make this feature help to tell the story and be itself a part of the history rather than for the sake of the parties whose portraits appear, or their admiring friends. The following principles have determined the selection: I have assumed that the reader would like to look into the face of each one connected with the work during the fifties and sixties. Of such as came in later I have selected those upon whom the Church herself has placed her stamp of approval by selecting them as pre-

siding elders or electing them delegates to the General Conference, the latter class including the laymen so honored. Besides these there are some who have been called to special work along missionary, educational, or charitable lines. I have not been able to secure quite all the earlier ones and a very few of the later have neglected or declined to send photographs, though twice solicited to do so. It is not intended that any portrait shall appear twice, each one being assigned to the group representing the most important work to which the person has been called.

I have drawn on many sources for the facts related, but am especially under obligation to Hiram Burch, Jacob Adriance, John Gallagher, and Dr. P. C. Johnson. Also to Dr. Goode's "Outposts of Zion," Dr. Davis's "Solitary Places Made Glad," Rev. James Haynes's "History of Omaha Methodism," and Rev. C. W. Wells's book, "Frontier Life." I am also indebted to Mr. Barrett and other officials of the State Historical Society for many courtesies.

I had expected to compress the printed matter into 300 pages, but in order to do justice to the subject I have been compelled to add 100 or more pages.

THE AUTHOR.

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INTRODUCTION.

It is well known that for ages this territory was inhabited by savage tribes of Indians. It is not so generally known that the territory now embraced in the State of Nebraska was foreign territory up to 1803, a little over fifty years before Methodism began its work in the territory. In 1681 LaSalle, a French explorer, having traversed the lake regions, came to the Mississippi River, down which he floated in his boats to its mouth, taking possession of the great Mississippi Valley in the name of his sovereign, Louis XIV, and naming the region Louisiana in his honor. Thus nearly 200 years before Methodism entered upon its work in Nebraska, or even before Methodism was born, the Roman Catholic Church had taken possession of all this fair territory. For a time (1763-1801) even Spain, the most Catholic of all Catholic nations, unless it be Italy, had possession. Even as early as 1540 a Spanish adventurer, Coronado, had visited Nebraska. But afterwards it reverted to France, and at the beginning of the nineteenth century Nebraska had for its ruler the Great Napoleon, and for its religion the Roman Catholic.

It is now well known that Napoleon's object in securing the retrocession of Louisiana from Spain to France,

was to work out a great scheme of colonization in Louisiana. How successful this strong man was in accomplishing his schemes, Europe had already come to know, to her sorrow, and trembled at the deadly certainty of his undertakings. He seemed to be a man of destiny that could not be defeated. But a higher destiny, the destiny of the great Republic, and the Protestant religion, was in this case in conflict with his personal destiny, and he was doomed to defeat. Yet it is startling to think how near this puissant man, now at the zenith of his power, able at this very moment to seize without question the reins of government in his own France, and soon to march in triumph with his conquering legions to Austerlitz, Jena, and Wagram, and dictate his own terms to Russia, Prussia, and Austria, came to the accomplishment of the plans of colonization in Louisiana, on which he had set his heart. Had he succeeded, the history would have been very different from the one I am writing.

How did we escape the clutches of this mighty man? How did he come to be turned from his long cherished purpose, a thing that so rarely occurred in his life?

When in 1801, Robert R. Livingston arrived in Paris with $2,000,000 and authority from Jefferson to purchase a small strip of ground which would secure to us the mouth of the Mississippi, and also the right to the navigation of the river, Napoleon was nearly ready to consummate his great scheme of colonization, and as a recent writer puts it: "But for the delay imposed upon the

First Consul, first by Godoy, who would not yield Louisiana until every condition of its transfer had been fulfilled, and secondly by Toussaint and his followers, who balked the French in San Domingo, General Voctor at this time might have been setting in order a threatening foreign host at New Orleans."

Happily, before they succeeded in this western country, circumstances and events were by the Louisiana Purchase providentially closing this territory forever to the domination of the Catholic religion, and opening it to the best type of Protestantism. While the political exigencies of the Great Napoleon, and the wisdom and statesmanship of the greater Jefferson, made them the immediate human agencies by which this new state of affairs was brought about, subsequent events have made it plain that it had always been the purpose of God that this continent, as a whole, and Nebraska as a part, should be dedicated to a purer and more spiritual type of religion, with a moral and spiritual efficiency capable of building out of a heterogenous multitude that should come from all parts of the world, and from all the races of men, a homogeneous race of Americans.

And it was no accident or mere coincidence that while political events were so shaping as to give ample territorial scope, the prime factors that were to mold these elements into the most free, intelligent, moral, and forceful nation on the earth, were at the same time being brought into existence and raised to an efficiency equal to

the needs of the new country and the new nation. It hardly needs to be stated that the two factors that were to make the largest contribution to this result were that system of public schools that was to provide free education to the masses, and that Church, that by its spirit, organization, and method, was to proclaim a free gospel to the masses.

Of national greatness Leckey, the historian, says:* "Its foundation is laid in pure domestic life, in commercial integrity, in a high standard of moral worth and public spirit, in simple habits, in courage, uprightness and soundness and moderation of judgment." Bancroft, our great American historian, says: "The Methodists were the pioneers of religion. The breath of liberty has wafted their message to the masses of the people; encouraged them to collect white and black in church and greensward for council in divine love and full assurance of faith, and carried their consolations and songs and prayers to the farthest cabins of the wilderness."†

This recognition on the part of Leckey of those moral ideals for which Methodism has consistently stood as the true elements that constitute national greatness, and the recognition by Bancroft of Methodism as the pre-eminently pioneer Church, promoting these qualities in the masses of sturdy emigrants out of which these great States were to be built, is but the expression of that

* Quoted by Kidd, Social Ev., p. 326.

† Quoted by Moore, Debt of Republic to Methodism.

consensus of opinion held by those most qualified to judge that the vigorous evangelism of the Methodist itinerants did more to conserve the best moral qualities the people brought with them into the great West, and to stimulate into healthy development those finer, stronger traits of character that constituted the vigorous and all conquering manhood of the West.

If then we inquire what were the influences that determined the character of the men and women that were to transform the 76,000 square miles of raw prairie that constitutes, territorially, the State of Nebraska into a State characterized by the highest civilization, and as low a percentage of ignorance as any State in the world, we must go back to that beginning of the peaceful conquest of the continent that began immediately after the brave colonists had effected their independence and set out on their national career.

Perhaps no one has set forth more forcefully and clearly the great movement of the population from east to west, which set in immediately after the war of the Revolution, than did President Roosevelt in his address at the Bi-Centennial celebration of the birth of John Wesley, in New York, February 26, 1903. The following extract will show his estimate of the movement and the great service which the Methodist pioneer preacher rendered during the period:

"For a century after the declaration of independence the greatest work of our people, with the exception only

of the work of self-preservation under Lincoln, was the work of the pioneers as they took possession of this continent. During that century we pushed westward from the Alleghanies to the Pacific, southward to the gulf and the Rio Grande, and also took possession of Alaska. The work of advancing our boundary, of pushing the frontier across forest and desert and mountain chain, was the great typical work of our nation; and the men who did it—the frontiersmen, plainsmen, mountain men—formed a class by themselves. It was an iron task, which none but men of iron soul and iron body could do. The men who carried it to a successful conclusion had characters strong alike for good and for evil. If left to himself, without moral teaching and moral guidance, without any of the influences that tend towards the uplifting of man and the subduing of the brute within him, sad would have been his, and therefore, our fate. From this fate we have been largely rescued by the fact that together with the rest of the pioneers went the pioneer preachers; and all honor be given to the Methodists for the great proportion of these pioneer preachers whom they furnished.

"These preachers were of the stamp of old Peter Cartwright—men who suffered and overcame every hardship in common with their flock, and who in addition tamed the wild and fierce spirits of their fellow pioneers. It was not a task that could have been accomplished by men desirous to live in the soft places of the earth and to walk easily on life's journey. They had to possess the

spirit of the martyrs, but not of martyrs who could oppose only passive endurance to wrong. The pioneer preachers warred against the forces of spiritual evil with the same fiery zeal and energy that they and their fellows showed in the conquest of the rugged continent. They had in them the heroic spirit that scorns ease if it must be purchased by a failure to do duty, the spirit that courts risk and a life of hard endeavor if the goal to be reached is really worth attaining. Great is our debt to these men and scant the patience we need show toward their critics.

"It is easy for those who stay at home in comfort, who never have to see humanity in the raw, or to strive against the dreadful naked forces which appear clothed, hidden, and subdued in civilized life—it is easy for such to criticise the men who, in rough fashion, and amid grim surroundings, make ready the way for the higher life that is to come afterwards; but let us all remember that the untempted, and the effortless should be cautious in passing too heavy judgment upon their brethren who may show hardness, who may be guilty of shortcomings, but who nevertheless do the great deeds by which mankind advances.

"These pioneers of Methodism had the strong, militant virtues which go to the accomplishment of such deeds. Now and then they betrayed the shortcomings natural to men of their type, but their shortcomings seem small indeed when we place them beside the magnitude of the work they achieved."

THE PROBLEM.

While Nebraska had been inhabited by no less than 10,000 human beings prior to the settlement which began in 1854, these aboriginal inhabitants may be said to have built up absolutely nothing that was of value to the new comers. The reason for this is found in the fact that these aboriginals belonged to one of those undeveloped and unchristianized races that depend almost entirely on the resources of unaided nature to supply their simple wants. For them to change their location, or to remain in the same place for a century or more made scarcely any change in the general aspects of the country. When they came they brought nothing into the country; while they staid they did nothing to develop the natural resources of the country; if they went away there was little or nothing they could take with them that would affect the country in one way or another. In the Christian sense of the word, they can hardly be said to have known what a home was, or how to make one. Their wants were so few and simple that scarcely anything that characterizes the Nebraska of to-day was in existence then. It could not be said that they had developed any form of industry or commerce. Hence they had no farms, strictly speaking, but only a few stray patches of broken soil where the squaws raised a little maize or vegetables. There were no industries, unless we would call such establishments as that of the "ancient arrow-maker in the land

of the Dakotahs," institutions of industry. There were no schools or churches, except such as had been brought in by the white missionaries, and there was only one of these, at Bellevue. Indeed, it may be affirmed that the Indians turned Nebraska over to the Christianized white race in a state of raw, crude nature, not one whit improved, or its wealth and resources developed in all the years and centuries of their possession, and with not a single element of modern Christian civilization in existence. Everything had to be built up from the foundation. It is marvelous how quickly these settlers surrounded themselves with all these elements of the highest Christian civilization. And the church edifice was felt to be as much of a necessity as the school-house, and would come in due time. And though the money to build school-houses was raised by taxation, while that to build churches must be raised by voluntary contributions, the church was none the less certain to be built. And though the teacher's salary was raised by taxation and he was given legal recourse to collect it at law, while the preacher's support must come from voluntary offerings, and in the case of our Methodist preacher, he had no legal right to fix the amount of his own salary and no recourse by civil law to collect it, yet the people were just as sure to have a preacher as they were to have teachers for their children, and his work was just as faithfully and efficiently done as that of the teacher.

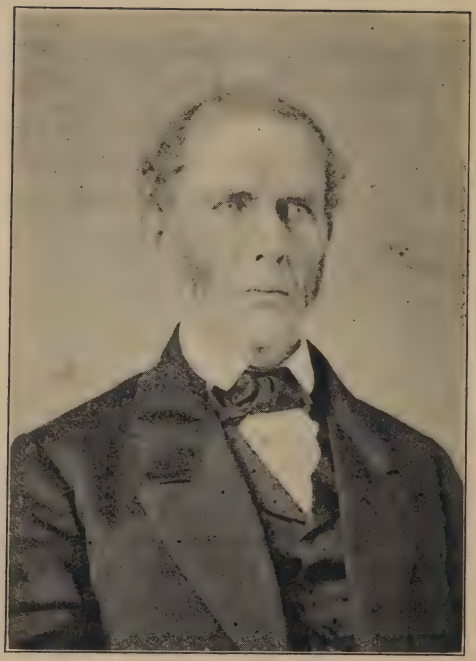
THE PERIODS OF THE HISTORY OF NEBRASKA METHODISM.

WITH the exception of Kansas, the development of which was simultaneous and under like conditions, the development and history of Nebraska Methodism are unique in the character and distinctness of the periods into which it naturally divides itself. The two main periods are the first quarter of a century, during which the pioneer phase of the work predominates, and the second quarter of a century in which while there was some pioneer work yet to be done, the building of churches and parsonages, the more complete organization of the forces, the founding and development of her educational and benevolent institutions, and the development and strengthening of the older charges, were her chief tasks.

The first quarter of a century may be subdivided into three periods. The first of these extends from 1854 to 1861, and is marked by the first events connected with the beginning of our work, the organization of the Kansas-Nebraska Conference, the external conditions under which the work proceeded being characterized by an almost unprecedented financial disturbance and depression, and an entirely unprecedented political struggle between freedom and slavery in the political arena, causing great excitement and intensity of feeling between the opposing forces; the second of these periods opens with the organization of the Nebraska Conference in 1861, and ex-

tending to 1870, the external circumstances attending the work being the unprecedented Civil War, and the reconstruction period following, and also the inflated currency and consequent high cost of living, without any corresponding inflation of the salaries; the third period, which opened in 1870 and closed in 1880, was characterized by great growth in numbers and rapid extension of our frontier line toward the western part of the State, the external conditions being that of a vast tide of immigration which set in in the early part of the period, adding 329,549 to the 122,993 in 1870, bringing great growth and prosperity to the country and Church, to be followed by the unprecedented grasshopper scourge, which began in 1874 and continued for several years, not only checking immigration, but causing not a few discouraged settlers to leave the country. The early seventies was also a time of great revivals and spiritual ingatherings.

The last twenty-four years, beginning with 1880, may properly be called the fourth period. This will be characterized by the growth and better organization of the individual Churches, the organization of the Conferences, the building of churches, and bringing into the field many subsidiary and helpful agencies.



Rev. W. H. Goode.

The fiirst man appointed to an official position in relation to Nebraska Methodism.

HISTORY OF NEBRASKA METHODISM.

CHAPTER I.

FIRST PERIOD. (1854-1861.)

THE FIRST WORKERS IN THE FIELD.

Rev. W. H. Goode, D. D., of the Indiana Conference, was the first to be placed by the authority of the Methodist Church in official relation to the work in Nebraska, being appointed June 3, 1854. There had been occasional sermons preached at earlier dates by Methodist preachers. Rev. Harrison Presson, who is still living, and is an honored superannuated member of the Nebraska Conference, informs me that on April 21, 1850, he, in company with a large colony on their way to the Pacific Coast, camped over the Sabbath on what is now the site of Omaha, and that he preached a sermon that day from the text, Isa. xxxv, 1. This was doubtless the first Methodist sermon ever preached in Nebraska.

Rev. Harrison Presson,
Who preached the first Methodist sermon in Nebraska, April 21, 1850.

Rev. H. T. Davis, D. D., in his book of personal reminiscences, entitled "Solitary Places Made Glad,"

states that in 1851 a Rev. William Simpson, who had at the Iowa Conference been appointed to the Council Bluffs Mission, learning that there were a few settlers across the river, went over and preached to them.

In a letter from J. W. Barns, he states that his wife, a daughter of Rev. W. D. Gage, had a very distinct recollection that in January or February, 1853, her father preached to a few settlers at old Ft. Kearney (now Nebraska City).

While it is to the credit of these men of God that they seized these first opportunities to preach the Gospel within the bounds of what is now the State of Nebraska, the congregations to which they preached were merely passing emigrants, or transient settlers, and therefore these sermons can hardly be regarded as the beginnings of Methodism in Nebraska, or to sustain any practical relation to the permanent work in the State.

The real beginning of Nebraska Methodism is found in the following communication, which on the third of June, 1854, Bishop E. R. Ames addressed to the Rev. W. H. Goode, D. D.:

"Rev. W. H. Goode:

"Dear Brother,—It is understood that emigration is tending largely to Nebraska (a name then embracing both territories, Kansas and Nebraska). It seems probable that the Church ought soon to send some devoted missionaries to that country. But there is not such a knowledge of details respecting the topography and population of these regions as to enable the Church authorities to act understandingly in the premises. You are therefore appointed to visit and explore the country as thor-

oughly as practicable, for the purpose of collecting information on these points. In performing this work you will be governed by your own judgment, and make full reports, in writing, of your labor and its results, so that it may be known how many ministers, if any, should be sent, and at what particular points they should be located.

Yours truly, E. R. AMES,

"Bishop Methodist Episcopal Church."

This communication from the bishop summoning Dr. Goode from a pleasant and prosperous and honorable career in Indiana, where Methodism had already become strong and respected, to a career of hardship on the frontier, illustrates the three principal features of the Methodist economy, which perhaps more than anything else, gave her not only her pre-eminent place as a pioneer Church, but also gave her the unparalleled success as revealed in the history of Christianity in this country. The first of these features is the general superintendency, by which her bishops in the regular course of their work visit personally all parts of the field and come in close touch with all her working forces, and soon become cognizant of the needs of each field, and also come to know each of the preachers and their peculiarities, and which of them are equipped for any special service. In the quasi-military power with which the Church has clothed them, by which they can command the service of any man, anywhere, for any work, whatever its character and wherever it may be, may be found the second feature giving efficiency to the Church. While technically this power is absolute, and might be wielded arbitrarily, this is rarely the case. Dr. Goode himself, than whom few have

been summoned to harder fields by this same episcopal authority, bears witness to the spirit in which this vast power is wielded, in these words, used in connection with his appointment in 1843 to the superintendency of an Indian school in Arkansas: "I was consulted; for authoritatively as our bishops are empowered to speak and implicitly as our ministry are wont to obey, for the Gospel's sake, I have yet to learn the first instance in which an arbitrary or unreasonable requirement has been made, by which any brother has been transferred to a distant field, irrespective of private considerations and wishes. No man ever takes a foreign field or even a remote field except as a volunteer; a policy at once wise and humane."

The third feature consists in what the military general would call the *esprit de corps,* or what in its spiritual aspect would be termed a spirit of devotion to the cause that makes men willing to go anywhere for Christ's sake. It is this last feature which is moral and spiritual in its nature that gives efficiency to the other two which relate to the polity of the Church. With this spirit all exercise of arbitrary power on the part of the bishops is rendered unnecessary. They only need to convince a man that the Master needs him in a certain field, and he responds, "Here am I, send me." Without this spirit, all exercise of arbitrary authority would be in vain, for success in moral and spiritual fields is impossible unless the workman's heart is in the work.

Happy for Methodism and the cause of Christ and the interests of our country, whenever our general superintendents have faced some emergency requiring some strong, wise man to meet it, they nearly always knew

where to find the man, and they usually found the man ready for and equal to the emergency.

The selection of Dr. Goode emphasizes another fact of immense importance in the development of the work in the Western States, and that was the selection of the very best men for leadership on the frontier. In nothing has the far-seeing wisdom of our bishops been more manifest than in this feature of their policy. As such men as Paul had been chosen as the foundation builders at the beginning of the Christian movement, so in that great movement of population from east to west that has within a little over a century spread over an entire continent, and built up a strong, free republic, Methodism has always picked some of its strongest men and sent them and kept them at the front. It is greatly to the credit of these strong men that they have been willing to go. And the bishops have found them all the more ready to go because they themselves have always been ready to make the greatest sacrifices for Christ's sake.

It is difficult to conceive how they could have made a better selection than Dr. Goode. He was a recognized leader in Indiana Methodism at a time when such men as E. R. Ames, Matthew Simpson, and Thomas Bowman were at the forefront of the Church in that State. That he ranked along with these is evident from the fact that it is said that when Ames was elected bishop, Dr. Goode himself had a vote large enough to give promise of ultimate success had he remained in the field, being only one less than that received by Ames; but desiring, above every thing the election of a Western man, which seemed very important at that time, he magnanimously withdrew in favor of Ames, and secured his election. At the time

he was appointed to his mission to Nebraska and Kansas, he was serving as presiding elder of the South Bend District, comfortably situated, and greatly honored among his brethren, many of whom earnestly advised him to remain, both for his own sake and theirs. The work he was doing was congenial, and having already spent several years on the frontier as superintendent of our Indian school at Ft. Coffee, in the southwestern portion of Arkansas, he well knew the hardships involved in such a mission. At first he was tempted to refuse the appointment, and went so far as to prepare a letter to that affect, informing the bishops that he could not see that it was his duty to go. But retaining the letter some time, and praying over it, it began to assume another aspect, that of duty. Perhaps, after all, the bishops knew what was required, and his fitness for the work to be done, better than he himself did. To Dr. Goode duty was imperative, and in every case took precedence over all considerations of ease and comfort. If they with their superior opportunity of knowing what was needed to advance the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, deemed him to be the man best equipped for that work, then it was plainly his duty to go. He tore up the first letter, and addressed another to the bishops, placing himself at their disposal.

His first commission, it will be seen, was that of a "scout," and was preliminary to the main movement. It was in anticipation of what was yet to be, rather than providing for what was. For this service his previous experience on the frontier among the Indians fitted him, and doubtless this fact, together with his good judgment, in which they reposed implicit confidence, influenced the

bishops in making choice of him for this difficult and important service.

Thus, four days after the Kansas-Nebraska bill, providing for the organization of these territories, became a law, and twenty-three days prior to the proclamation of the President declaring the Indian title extinguished and the country open for settlement, and four months before the organization of the Territorial government, the Methodist Church had made provision for the religious needs of the people yet to come, by the appointment of one of her best equipped men to go in person to the field and ascertain by actual observation what was needed.

It is difficult for us in these days of through railroad lines and palace Pullman cars, that would have brought him to Nebraska in twenty-four hours, with scarcely any discomfort or fatigue, to conceive what it meant for Dr. Goode, at the age of fifty or more, when most men are thinking how they can make life more comfortable, to make the journey of 600 miles to Kansas, and then 200 more to Nebraska by private conveyance or stage. On the 8th day of June, five days after receiving his commission, he started from Richmond, Ind., where he had purchased the necessary outfit of team and wagon, and after a long and tedious journey, requiring four weeks, reached his destination in Kansas, which, having more settlers, was to be his first headquarters. It was not till late in July that he reached Nebraska.

The details of that journey possess thrilling interest, and may best be told by extracts from his own account, as given in his "Outposts of Zion."

His work in Kansas had already brought on severe illness, but he felt that he must also visit the Nebraska

portion of the field, and it is to his trip to this field the following extracts refer:

"Still feeble, suffering, and apprehensive of results, I urged on my course, and about three in the afternoon reached the house of Rev. Thomas B. Markham, then residing upon the bank of the Missouri, nearly opposite to where the town of Kickapoo, in Kansas, now stands. Here I found a brother in Christ and a kind Christian family, who, though then afflicted themselves, received me cordially, sympathized in my condition, and ministered to my necessities.

"According to expectation, the ensuing day brought on another paroxysm, by which I was completely prostrated, and for a period of about nine days I was confined by illness. For a time, uncertain as to the result, it was natural that my thoughts should turn, as they had more than once done before under similar circumstances, to the idea of dying from home, far from family and friends. The trial was severe; but, through the grace of God, I think I have, at such times, always felt resignation to the Divine will. Once I well remember having my pocket-book and pencil brought, and feebly tracing what I supposed might by a last brief line to the companion of my life, who has since preceded me to glory. But God had other designs for me.

"By the 22d I began to feel as though I should summon up my little strength and again address myself to the journey. Finding myself unable to manage my team I determined to dispose of them and commit myself to the stage-route up through northwestern Missouri, stopping at different points, and making excursions into the Territories as health and circumstances allowed. I ac-

cordingly sold, at low rates, my carriage and horses, with such part of my equipage as I could, gave away the remainder, and prepared for another mode of travel.

"Returning to St. Joseph, I took my passage in the stage for Council Bluffs on the 28th, with the privilege of stopping at such points as I might think proper. Feeble as I was, I found that I must start in the evening and travel all night. Detained at one time on the bank of the Nodaway, waiting for the ferryman, and worn down by fatigue and debility, I lay down upon the ground and slept an hour; awoke and found myself chilled; was alarmed for the probable results, but traveled on and experienced no bad effects. I stopped a little after daylight at Oregon, the county seat of Holt County, some ten miles back from the river. Here I left the stage, and obtaining a horse, for twenty miles I followed the stage road along the bluffs, and then leaving them turned in the direction of the river, arriving in the afternoon at the cabin of Colonel Archer, where I found a kind home among Tennessee Methodists, recently settled in Missouri Bottom. On the day following my kind host volunteered his services to take me across the river in a canoe, ran up the great Nehama a little way, and landed for the first time upon the soil of Nebraska Territory. (July 29, 1854.) Finding no settlers here, I spent some time in meditating, prospecting, writing, etc.; recrossed the river and returned to the cabin of my pioneer friend."

Again taking the stage, he went to a point opposite to Old Fort Kearney, there left the stage and again crossed the Missouri. Resuming his narrative, he says: "Old Fort Kearney was an evacuated military post, the name and the troops having been transferred to a new

post about two hundred miles up the Platte River. A substantial block-house, one old log dwelling, and the remains of a set of rude, temporary barracks, were all that was there to be seen of the old fort. Squatters had taken possession of the lands, and the two rivals, Nebraska City and Kearney City, had been laid off, the one above and the other below the mouth of South Table Creek. The site of the old fort, now of Nebraska City, is bold and fine. I found a single frame shanty erected, in which were a few goods, and a single settler in the old fort cabin in the person of Major Downs. I found him to be a frank, generous-hearted soldier, possessing some noble traits of character, with some unfortunate remains of army habits. He took me to his house, treated me kindly and generously, exhibited quite an interest in my mission, took down his city plat, and, in my presence, marked off certain lots, since risen to a value equal to five times the outlay and expenses of my whole trip, which he then and there donated to the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"Having taken all the steps practicable toward the introduction of our work here, I took leave of the Major and his kind family, recrossed the Missouri, returned to Sidney, and about one hour after midnight again took the stage."

The next day Dr. Goode reached Council Bluffs, and after a brief rest of a day he at once crossed the Missouri to the village of Omaha, which at that time was being laid out. After surveying the field at that point he went on down the river and spent the Sabbath, August 6th, with Rev. Wm. Hamilton, of the Presbyterian Church, at his mission at Bellevue, preaching his first sermon in

Nebraska on that occasion. The next week he returned to Council Bluffs and from thence started on his return trip to his home, going by stage across the State of Iowa to Rock Island, thence by railroad to his home in Indiana. Thus ended this memorable journey that as subsequent events reveal, meant so much to the future of both Kansas and Nebraska.

This record of his journey of over 800 miles from his home to Omaha, by private conveyance, or by stage, consuming two months of time, exposed to the dreaded Asiatic cholera then prevalent along portions of the Missouri traversed, and under conditions of physical disabilities which at times became so serious as to threaten his life, and threatened by the excited pro-slavery people of Kansas and Missouri with tar and feathers, or even worse, is one rarely paralleled in the history of the Church. Little wonder that after this veritable hero, who so courageously and efficiently performed this preliminary survey of the great field and reported its needs to the authorities, should immediately be re-commissioned to the same field to take charge of its development as superintendent of missions in Kansas and Nebraska. That he cheerfully did so reveals the true greatness and nobility of his nature and the completeness of his consecration to the Master's service more fully than any words can do. This will become even more apparent as the story of those early days is told.

CHAPTER II.

FIRST PERIOD. (1854-1861.)

KANSAS TERRITORY having the greatest number of settlers, properly commanded his first attention, but after a month of travel in that territory we find him, early in December, turning his face toward the Nebraska portion of the Territory, though there were as yet few permanent settlers even at the more prominent points, such as Nebraska City and Omaha.

The eagle eye of Dr. Goode was on the lookout and we find him in December, 1854, making his way up to the Nebraska end of his immense field, on horseback, his customary mode of travel in winter. It so often happened that there was difficulty in finding something to eat for man or horse, that the good Doctor carried corn and provision along with him for emergencies. He speaks of that trip being "rough and fatiguing; my horse became lame, and on the second or third day, failed." Procuring another he proceeded on his toilsome way. But on the first day the new steed became sick and seemed about to die. While not dying, this second horse had to be abandoned and a third one procured, with which he made his way to a point opposite Nebraska City, his intended point for the Sabbath. The ice was already running to such an extent that the regular ferry had been abandoned and the trip across the river had to be made in a skiff, at no small risk of life. But Dr. Goode always

felt that he must get to his appointments at all hazards. Here he found the hotel of his old friend, Major Downes, so crowded that he concluded to hunt up the cabin of the pastor, W. D. Gage. This was over in the brush some distance from the hotel, and night having come on, he, with great difficulty, found his way to the cabin parsonage and was royally entertained by the pastor's family.

The next day being the Sabbath he held service in one of the rooms of the hotel, amidst much confusion on the part of some of the guests who were not interested. No class had as yet been organized, the pastor, for some reason, was absent, and he somewhat sadly says: "This was all there was of the first quarterly-meeting at Old Fort Kearney," and it may be added, the first in the Territory. But before leaving Nebraska City he had some consultation "as to the means of prosecuting the work in this growing field, and especially the erection of a house of worship on the lots already donated."

He had intended going on as far as Omaha, there having as yet been no pastor secured for that point, but his horses having failed him, he deemed it expedient to abandon that part of his trip for the present and return home.

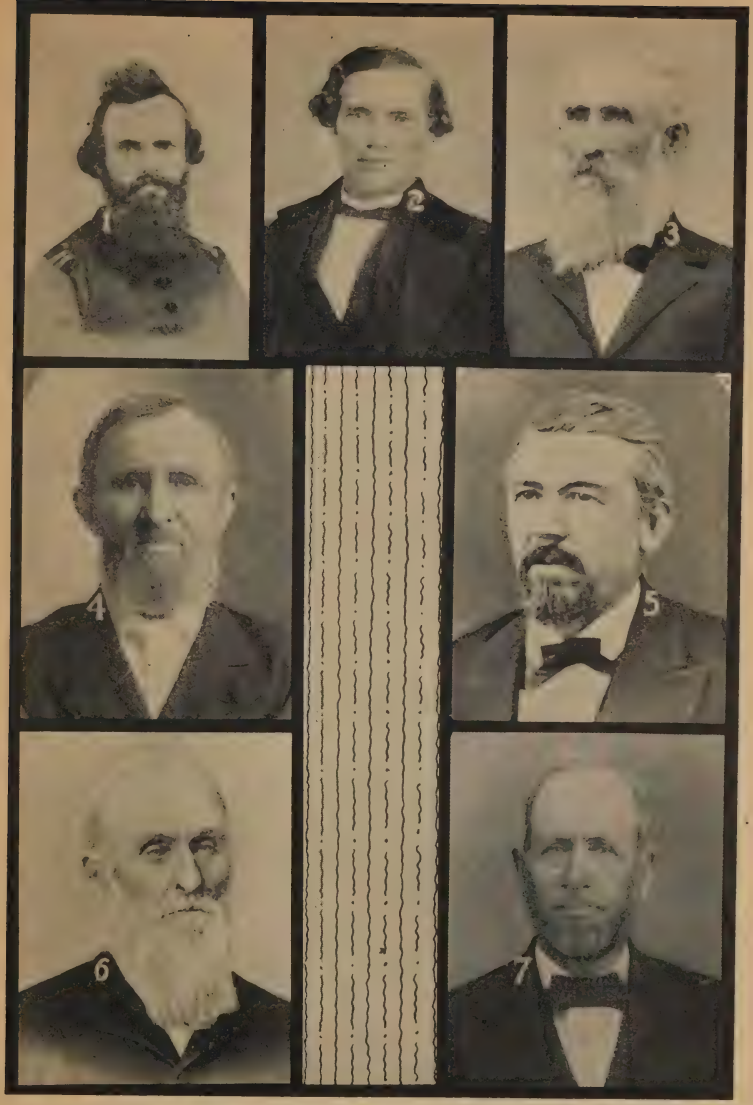
While as yet there were few actual settlers, there were many who had been on the ground, selected and staked off their claims, returned to their Eastern homes and were expecting to come back in the spring, bringing their families with them, so there was little that could be done until that time.

In anticipation of this influx of permanent settlers in the spring of 1855, Dr. Goode had published a call in the

Advocates for men to supply the field, only one man so far having been appointed. W. D. Gage, who has been noted elsewhere, was assigned to Nebraska City in 1854. A quotation from his book will show the care with which Dr. Goode selected these men and the spirit in which he expected them to come to the field, and prosecute the work, and the difficulties he experienced in procuring the right kind of men:

"Early in the winter responses began to be received to the public calls for ministerial aid, which we had made through the Church papers. These calls were general. No man was individually requested or advised to come into our new and exposed work. All were left to follow the call of duty or of inclination. Our tables were loaded with letters of inquiry, expressing good wishes, and making contingent and indefinite proposals for the future. But these did not fill the immediate and urgent demands of our work. Occasionally, however, one was found whose first proposition was, 'Here am I; send me.' With such our work in the Territories has been supplied. None have been pressed into service.

"In a very large majority of instances our supplies were men of the right stamp, volunteers, men of energy, willing to 'endure hardness as good soldiers.' There were a few instances to the contrary. Attempts were made to foist upon us, from the older Conferences, men who were too indolent or incompetent to labor acceptably where they were; but who, in the judgment of good brethren, 'would do for the frontier.' Such efforts were generally detected before consummation; or, if not, soon afterward, in which case they were disposed of in the most summary way practicable. The speculating



SOME OF THE MEN WHO CAME IN THE FIFTIES.

1. Jerome Spillman. 2. J. W. Taylor. 3. Lorenzo W. Smith. 4. Jacob Adriance. 5. David Hart. 6. Z. B. Turman. 7. Jesse L. Fort.

mania, that has sometimes seized Western recruits, or perhaps even prompted their transfer, has been but little known among the traveling preachers of these Territories. They have been, for the most part, Homines unius operis.

"Rev. A. L. Downey was the first volunteer that came to our aid. He was appointed to Leavenworth mission. The second in order of time who appeared among us, was Rev. Isaac F. Collins, a transfer from the Arkansas Conference, and a man of considerable experience in the work of Indian missions, who was assigned to the Omaha City Mission.

"Some new fields, also, were laid off and supplied. Meeting, providentially, with Rev. Hiram Burch, a young man from Illinois, who had, in feeble health, been laboring as a supply in Northern Texas, I employed him to take charge of a new field in the northern extreme of Kansas, known as Wolf River Mission. His health improved; he was received into the Iowa Conference the ensuing session, appointed to Nebraska City, and has ever proved a faithful and efficient minister. Upon a steamboat in Missouri River, I met with a young Englishman with credentials and apparent qualifications for the work, and employed him to travel between the Nemahas, and organize the Nemaha Mission. This was Rev. David Hart.

"Thus, in the course of the year, our entire work was manned. The order of time has been anticipated in this statement, for the purpose of presenting all the names at one view. My Wyandott home became a place of resort, and an outfitting point for preachers coming into the Territories; a circumstance which probably had much to

do in fixing the jealousy and inveterate hate of pro-slavery sentinels, secular and ecclesiastical, posted along the border."

Thus we see that this alert superintendent had pastors in the field at all the strategical points before there were organized flocks to shepherd. W. D. Gage was sent to Nebraska City nine months before a class was formed, Isaac Collins was in Omaha six months before an organization could be effected, and David Hart was sent early in the spring of 1855 to the Nemaha Mission where he must wait and toil till the following fall before effecting an organization.

It is a very suggestive coincidence that in the same year that the territory which afterward constituted Nebraska passed from the possession of Catholic France to that of Protestant America by the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, there was born in Pennsylvania the one who should, half a century afterward, be the first to be assigned to a pastorate in the territory, and as the chaplain of the first legislature, should typify the character of the State to be built up in the Territory. Though W. D. Gage was a humble, unpretentious, rugged pioneer preacher, he was the representative of the most aggressive form of Protestant Christianity then in the field, the Church which has wrought most potently in making the great State of Nebraska what it is.

It would be interesting to speculate about what might have been if the Louisiana Purchase had not been made, and the territory remained in the possession of a Catholic country, and Catholic colonies spread over these prairies, and Catholic priests instead of Methodist preachers like W. D. Gage and other Protestant pioneers had been the

first to propogate Christianity on this territory. The results in other exclusively Roman Catholic countries supply an answer, and the answer thus supplied makes us very thankful that matters have turned out as they have. An allwise providence has seen to it that such should be the case, and the more pleasing and profitable task is ours to trace the work of the Gages, Burches, Davises, Taylors, Harts, and others of the historic band that in the fifties lifted and held aloft the banner of Prince Immanuel on the prairies of Nebraska.

REV. W. D. GAGE,

The first pastor appointed in Nebraska, October, 1854.

W. D. Gage was converted at the age of twenty-one and entered the New York Conference at the age of twenty-five. After spending twenty-six years of faithful ministry in the New York, Genesee, Illinois, Arkansas, and Missouri Conferences, he was, in October, 1854, appointed, at the age of fifty-one, to the Nebraska City Mission. Being just prior to this a member of the Missouri Conference, which was just across the river from the lower portions of Nebraska, Father Gage had, previous to this time, crossed over to the Nebraska side, visiting and preaching, as elsewhere noted, at Old Fort Kearney (Nebraska City,) as early as January, 1853, and was known to be familiar with the field. After serving as pastor at Nebraska City, and chaplain of the first Nebraska Legislature, he asked and received a location. This step was afterward regarded by himself and friends as a great mistake which he very much regretted. How-

ever, at the time of his location he was already past fifty, with a family about him, and doubtless his motive was to secure a home for these loved ones, which continuance in the work at that time would make difficult, if not impossible. Some years afterward he was re-admitted to the Conference and did many years of faithful service on the frontier.

He was married to Miss Sarah Schoonmaker, January 1, 1833, who died in 1862, leaving three daughters. Four others preceded her to the heavenly world.

Father Gage passed to his reward, November 20, 1885, and his brethren in the Conference place in their Minutes this tribute to their fallen brother: "He was a minister of good preaching ability, and very successful in every department of Church work. He now rests in peace, and his works do follow him."

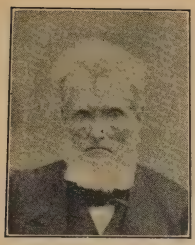
The charge to which W. D. Gage was assigned October, 1854, was Nebraska City Mission, making that the first place to be recognized in the list of appointments. It included at the first all the settlements extending north along the river as far as Rock Bluffs. It was doubtless on this charge, in what was known as the Morris neighborhood, that the first Methodist class in Nebraska was formed, as early as March, 1855, and the first Sunday-school organized a month or two later.

This settlement is worthy of special mention as being probably the first distinctively Methodist settlement coming into the Territory. As early as 1853 there came into the section a few miles southwest of Rock Bluffs, W. H. Davis, together with Milton Morris, Abram Towner, Mr. Acketyer, Thomas Ashley, and six other heads of families, all members of the Methodist Church, except

Mr. Ashley (and he was converted at the second camp-meeting held in Nebraska, and in this same neighborhood, in August, 1857). This visit was made prior to the treaty by which the government obtained control of the land, which was not made until the following March, and did not take effect till June 24, 1854. But these enterprising Methodists did not wait for the government, but made a private treaty with the Otoe Indians, by which in consideration of the payment of ten dollars each to the Indians, and a promise to defend them in case the Otoes were attacked by their dreaded and powerful enemies, the Sioux, they were permitted to stake out their claims, which they at once proceeded to do. This arrangement was so highly satisfactory to the Indians that they made a great feast in honor of these pale-faced friends that for the sake of a few acres of their land agreed to pay them some money, but especially to help them in their contest with their foes. They even examined the white man's teeth to see that everything was right.

After completing these preliminary arrangements, Mr. Davis and his party returned to their homes to spend the winter, and came back to Nebraska the following year with their families, and formed a permanent settlement some two or three miles southwest of old Rock Bluffs.

These were all men of intelligence and Christian character, with families of like character. Indeed some of them were of superior intelligence, and all characterized by an earnest type of piety. Father Davis was a man of culture and manly Christian character; Milton Morris, the religious leader, and his wife, were of superior intelligence and force of character. Previous to coming to Nebraska they had served as missionaries to the Sac

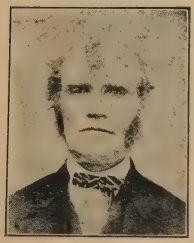


REV. MILTON MORRIS.

MRS. MILTON MORRIS.

REV. A. TOWNER.

MRS. A. TOWNER.



W. H. DAVIS.

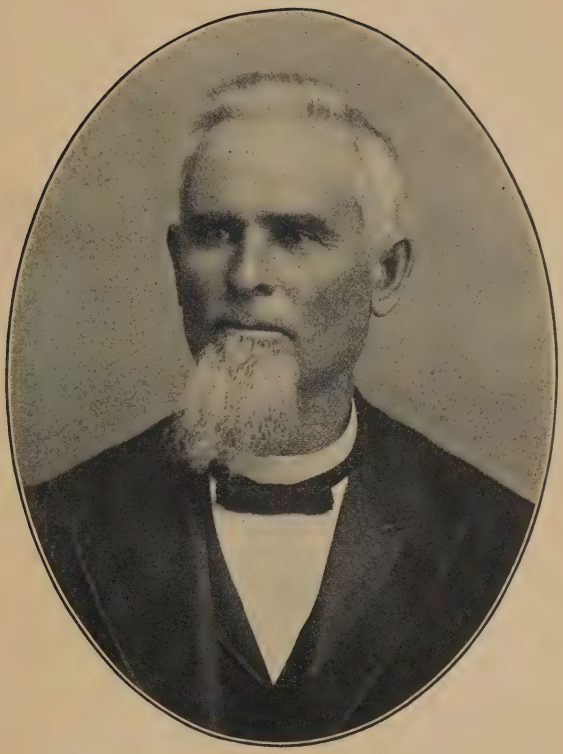
MRS. W. H. DAVIS.

REV. ELZA MARTIN.

THESE WERE ALL AMONG THE FIRST MEMBERS OF THE FIRST CLASS FORMED IN NEBRASKA, EXCEPT ELZA MARTIN, WHO JOINED THE CLASS IN APRIL, 1855.

and Fox tribes of Indians, and he was at the time of his coming to Nebraska an ordained local elder. Abram Towner was also a local preacher, and the first sermon ever preached in Cass County was delivered by him at the house of Thos. B. Ashley, in October, 1854.

Just when this company of earnest Methodists began to hold religious services, and organize themselves into a religious body, is not certainly known, but we may be sure that it was not long after they arrived on the ground, which was in the spring of 1854. With a positive spiritual experience such as they evidently possessed, they would not long "neglect the assembling of themselves" in religious worship, and Mrs. Spurlock, daughter of W. H. Davis, informs me that they at once began to hold prayer and class meeting, and an occasional preaching service in the cabins of the settlers, before even a schoolhouse could be erected. The exact date of their organization into a class can not be ascertained. Rev. Elza Martin, an ordained local preacher still living in the neighborhood of Falls City, informs me in a letter that when he moved into the settlement in April, 1855, he found the class already organized, and thinks the organization was effected at the quarterly-meeting held by Dr. Goode at the cabin of Father Morris, the preceding March, and referred to in his "Outposts of Zion." This would make it the first class organized in the Territory. But it seems more likely that Dr. Goode would have mentioned the fact had he at that time organized the class. Indeed, when we remember that those first settlers in the Morris neighborhood were nearly all members of the Methodist Church when they came there in 1854, making in all not less than twenty, it is highly improbable that with two



H. Burch

such zealous and experienced local preachers as Father Morris and Abram Towner, that they would remain long without an organization. Besides W. D. Gage was appointed as we have seen, as early as October, 1854, to Nebraska City Mission, which included all the settlements as far north as Rock Bluffs, and as they thus early had a zealous pastor, it is well-nigh certain that this first class was organized some time in 1854. At all events, there can be no doubt that this Morris class was the first one formed in the territory.

If the class in the Morris settlement was organized as early as in 1854, which is probable, the class at Nebraska City, though the head of the mission, was not organized until in April, 1855, and was probably the second organization effected in the territory.

Happily we are not without authentic information in regard to this date. John Hamlin* was the first class-leader, steward, trustee, and Sunday-school superintendent, and had the contract for building the first church building in Nebraska. His daughter, now Mrs. Melvina Brown, of Omaha, was a member of this first class, and to her I am chiefly indebted for these facts. The other members of this first class were Isabella Hamlin, the wife of John Hamlin; Rev. W. D. Gage and wife, Rev. J. T. Cannon and wife, and Rowina Craig. The organization took place in a little frame shanty, twelve by twelve feet in dimension, opposite where the Grand Central Hotel now stands. Rev. J. W. Taylor, who a few months after this succeeded Brother Gage as pastor, informs me that he organized the first Methodist Episcopal Sunday-school in Nebraska City.

* Since deceased.

In the fall of 1855 Hiram Burch was appointed to Brownville, but J. W. Taylor, who had been appointed to Nebraska City, proposed to the presiding elder that he and Brother Burch exchange places, which was effected, and Brother Burch became Brother Gage's successor.

The society was yet quite feeble in numbers, not to exceed sixteen, and none of these with much financial strength. But they had already begun to plan for a church building. As was often the case in those early days, the initial steps had been taken some time before by an outsider. Major Downs, who at the time of Dr. Goode's first visit to the Nebraska City in July, 1854, had donated two lots in the town site he had laid out on the abandoned ground where old Fort Kearney had been, for a Methodist church. This doubtless ranks as the first donation of any kind toward the erection of a church in Nebraska, except perhaps for mission churches for the Indians. While subsequent development in the building of the town made these lots less eligible in location for a church, they were quite valuable, and were readily exchanged for those on which the church was then erected, and on which the present edifice stands.

If the first contribution for the first Methodist church erected in Nebraska was made by a non-church member, the subsequent success of the enterprise depended largely on the generosity of another outsider, S. F. Nuckells, a banker, who generously gave one-fourth of the entire cost while the building was in progress, amounting to $1,125, and at the dedication gave $200 more.

These two cases are thus mentioned as typical of what took place very often in those early days, and even before the days of Church Extension help, made it possible for

little, struggling societies to secure places of worship. It indicates the fact that these worldly wise business men had come to place a high value on the Church as a great power for good in determining the character of the civilization that should prevail in the State. Thus it often happened that a large percentage of the means needed for the erection of the first churches came from these enterprising non-Christian business men, and in not a few cases, more than half the sum needed came from that source. Even in a place like O'Neil, Nebraska, where a large percentage of the population is Roman Catholic, Rev. B. Blain, who built our church at that place, says there was more money contributed by the Catholics for the building of the first Methodist church at that place than the Methodists themselves were able to give, there being but a handful of them, and they very poor. The mention of these facts is not intended to discredit the giving of the members themselves, which was doubtless in many of these cases, if not in all, far more in proportion to their ability than that of the non-Church members, and from higher motives, and at greater sacrifice.

While Brother Gage had already secured a subscription of $2,400, and had let the contract to John Hamlin for a brick church, forty by sixty feet, before leaving the charge, and probably immediately after the organization of the Church, the successful prosecution of the work was chiefly due to his successor, Rev. H. Burch, who reached Nebraska City, November 29, 1855. He at once addressed himself to the task of completing the projected church building. The walls had been completed to the square, half the subscription had been collected and paid to the contractor, and no more subscriptions were due

until the church was completed. The winter season had set in, and nothing more could be done till spring. Meanwhile a heavy wind had blown down the side walls. This caused consternation among the little band of sixteen members, and seemed like utter defeat to the enterprise. I will let Brother Burch tell the story of how this crisis was met:

"We had a meeting of the Board of Trustees, and after giving the subject a good deal of consideration, it was decided that the only thing to do was to go ahead and complete a church on the foundation already laid. To do this, it was necessary to borrow $800, as that amount under the contract was due the contractor, and because of the default of the payment of that sum the building, or rather the walls, were left uncovered and unsupported at the mercy of the wind. A note of $800 signed by the members of the board and the pastor, was placed in the bank, the money drawn and paid to the contractor, and the work of rebuilding begun. But before the building could be completed we had to borrow $400 more. In these days that would seem a small matter, but not so at that time, when the number was so small and so poverty stricken that none of our members were able to procure more than the necessaries of life."

JOHN HAMLIN.

Member of first class in Nebraska City, was first Sunday-school superintendent. Had contract for and built first church in Nebraska.

Thus by the wise and energetic work of the pastor, Hiram Burch, the self-sacrificing devotion of the little band of Methodists, and the generous contributions of the

friends outside of the Church, was this first Methodist church (and probably the first church of any kind except mission churches for the Indians) in the Territory carried forward to completion at a cost of $4,500, and in November, 1856, dedicated to the worship of God by Dr. Goode.

This historic church does not depend wholly on the fact that it happened to be first for the significance that makes it worthy of this detailed account of its construction, but from the first has justified the heroic sacrifices involved at the beginning. It at once became the scene of great revivals and has always housed a vigorous Methodist society.

OMAHA.

The next place to receive attention and the appointment of a regular pastor was the ambitious and growing village of Omaha. There was something about this location that attracted from the first settlement in 1854 some of the shrewdest and most far-seeing business men that came to the territory in those early years. From the first they seemed confident that Omaha was to be the metropolis of the West, and proceeded at once by all legitimate business methods, and some perhaps less scrupulous than they ought to have been, to realize their expectation. True, every town on the river from Rulo to Dakota City, entertained the same hopes. Some of them at the start possessed equal advantages, and one at least, Bellevue, superior natural advantages. Besides being a more eligible site in point of beauty, it was the point that nature seems to have determined as the proper place for the projected Pacific Railroad line to cross the Missouri,

furnishing a natural and easy route up the Papio and out on to the Platte bottom, which could have been constructed at far less expense than the line from Omaha. But from the first Bellevue and all the other competing points were outgeneraled by the business men of Omaha, who by first securing the removal of the territorial capital from Bellevue where Governor Burt first located it, to Omaha, and at immense expense secured the building of the bridge for the Union Pacific Railroad at Omaha, forever settled the metropolis question in their favor.

It was not likely that so wise a leader as Dr. Goode would fail to see and appreciate the strategical value of such a place and provide for it. Hence early in 1855, long before there was enough Methodists to form a class, he appointed Isaac F. Collins to the mission. This was probably in January, and he reached his field and entered upon his work about the 20th of the following March.

Thus it occurred at Omaha, as at many other places in Nebraska, that the first events of a religious character were Methodistic. The first sermon preached, the first official appointed to look after her spiritual interests, the first pastor assigned and present on the field, the first church organization effected, and the first Protestant church building erected, were all Methodist.

Of Isaac Collins little can be ascertained. During his pastorate at Omaha, he married a daughter of Brother Amsbary, the father of Rev. W. A. Amsbary. Another brother, Webster Amsbary, is still living, and furnishes me the following brief facts concerning this cultured and devoted man who laid the foundations of Omaha Methodism. He says the first time he saw Isaac Collins was

when, in 1855, he rode up to his father's log cabin on a pony, and announced himself as having been sent to Omaha Circuit. This extended north and west indefinitely. He also says that Collins was born in Michigan, and was educated at Ann Arbor. While a brother, Judson, went to China as a missionary, Isaac went to Arkansas, and there, after preaching some time, became principal of a seminary at Tellequia, in the Indian Territory. It was from this field that he came in response to Dr. Goode's call for workers in Kansas and Nebraska, and was assigned to Omaha. In 1858 he left the Nebraska portion and served some pastorates in Kansas.

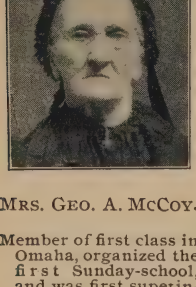
Isaac Collins was without a church to preach in or a house to live in. He soon found a place in which to live, being unmarried, and through the courtesy of the Territorial officials he was permitted to occupy the United States Government building in which to hold meetings. While it was not possible to effect an organization until six months after his arrival, he was not without a congregation, and some supporters, as nearly all the early settlers were anxious to have religious services maintained in the village, however they might feel towards the Methodist Church or its pastor.

We would be glad to know who constituted that historic class which Isaac Collins finally succeeded in organizing in the month of September, 1855. The beginning of a local Church organization, representing an aggressive type of Christianity, is a matter of great moral significance in any community. The mere presence of such an organization, with its church building, and its recurring religious services announced regularly to the community by the ringing of the bell in their hearing, is

a constant reminder of higher interests to be cared for, and must tend to check and curb the more sordid and selfish tendencies of our nature; but when you add to this mere existence the potent moral energies and inspiring influences of the messages of divine truth delivered every holy Sabbath by some faithful man of God, the instruction imparted in the Sunday-school, the prayers and testimonies and example of the faithful members, you have a center of moral and religious power which radiates a constant influence for good to the community; and when in addition to all these regular and stated services you have at frequent intervals gracious and sometimes powerful revivals, you have an agency for good that no community can afford to be without, being, as such a Church is, the chief conservator of public morals, and the promoter of those high ideals of life that tend to produce the best result in life and character. But all this is especially true when the place where this Church begins its humble career is destined to become a great city, with its intense activities begetting a forgetfulness of divine things, and its powerful agencies of positive evil demoralizing many of the people.

Rev. James Haynes, in his history of Omaha Methodism, says there were six enrolled in this first class, in September, 1855, but does not give the names. Nor is there any record preserved that affords information on this point. The only clue to this desirable information is found in the names of those who one year afterwards partook of the sacrament at the first quarterly-meeting ever held in Omaha. These were Mr. and Mrs. Amsbary, Mr. and Mrs. Collins, Mrs. Crowell, Mrs. McCoy, and Mrs. Harris, and some, if not all of these were probably mem-

bers of the original class, and have the distinction of starting Omaha Methodism on its career. Of Mr. and Mrs. Amsbary, little is known, except that besides giving their daughter to be the wife of Isaac Collins, they gave a son, W. A. Amsbary, to the Methodist ministry in Nebraska, who as the subsequent records will show, became a very efficient preacher of the Gospel. Of the others, Mrs. McCoy organized the first Sunday-school in Omaha, and was herself the first superintendent, and was permitted in many ways and through many years to serve the Church she loved in the city of Omaha. She died in the triumphs of the faith in the fall of 1902.



MRS. GEO. A. MCCOY.

Member of first class in Omaha, organized the first Sunday-school, and was first superintendent.

Brother Collins remained till the Conference of 1856, which met in October 23d. During his pastorate, besides organizing the class, he inaugurated and carried to completion, the first church erected in Omaha, though it was not dedicated till December, 1856.

This brief statement concerning the building of this first church in Omaha does not convey to our minds all that it meant for that brave pastor and his little flock of perhaps six, all of whom could not probably contribute one-fourth of the $4,500 necessary. Material was very expensive then, pine lumber being worth $100 per thousand. But with the larger conception of the Church as a public necessity in any community, and having raised part of the amount needed by the sale of a portion of their lots, he appealed to the public generally, first as-

certaining what each was able to give, and then boldly demanding that amount. The event proved this demand was honored to such an extent that the church was carried forward to completion and dedicated in December, 1856. It was located in what has since become the heart of the city, on lots donated by the town-site company at the corner of Douglas and Thirteenth Streets, on the ground now occupied by the Omaha National Bank.

We would gladly mention the laymen associated with Isaac Collins in this historic enterprise which meant so much of faith and sacrifice to them, but the loss of the early records make this impossible. We do not even know who the first trustees were, or who were on the building committee. We only know that of that memorable list that partook of the first communion in September, 1856, there was only one male member, Brother Amsbary, and he resided near Florence.

The subsequent history of Omaha up to the end of this first period brings into view some strong men, one of whom, John M. Chivington, who afterwards attained to national notoriety, if not national fame, in what is known as the Sand Creek massacre, when he was in command of troops in Colorado. He succeeded Isaac Collins as pastor one year, and at the Conference in April, 1857, was made presiding elder of the Omaha District, and the next year was transferred to the Nebraska City District. He continued on this district until 1860, when he went to Colorado. John M. Chivington was one of those strong, forceful characters who find it difficult to either control themselves or to subject themselves to the requirements of a Church, or to the rules of war, but are a law unto themselves. But for these defects he would have been a

power for good, as he was a strong preacher and possessed many of the elements which constitute successful leadership.

J. W. Taylor followed J. M. Chivington as pastor at Omaha. This devoted pioneer preacher came of Southern stock, having been born in Fayette County, Virginia, December 6, 1815. He was converted and united with the Church at the age of fourteen. His natural gifts of speech and song soon led to his being licensed to exhort and then to preach. He went from Virginia to Michigan, where he was married to Barbara Eiken, who was his constant and loyal companion for sixty-five years, and then passed to her reward. His first charge was White Oak Grove, in Platte County, Missouri, to which State he had removed, and where he spent eighteen years of faithful service in the western part, a section which became, in the fifties, the very hot-bed of border ruffianism. Platte County, the scene of his first and some of his subsequent labor, was the storm center of the pro-slavery opposition to Northern Methodist preachers. It was here that the infamous Platte County resolutions were passed, threatening a coat of tar and feathers for the first offense, and death for the second, to any Northern Methodist preacher who should proclaim the Gospel in that county. Though the fact that he was a Virginian relieved the situation in his case somewhat, the fact that he was a minister of the Northern Methodist Episcopal Church made it extremely perilous for him, and during the last few years in Missouri he discharged his duty at the peril of his life. One of his fellow workers on an adjoining charge, Rev. Sellers, was tarred and feathered, while another, Father Holland, was shot dead, and

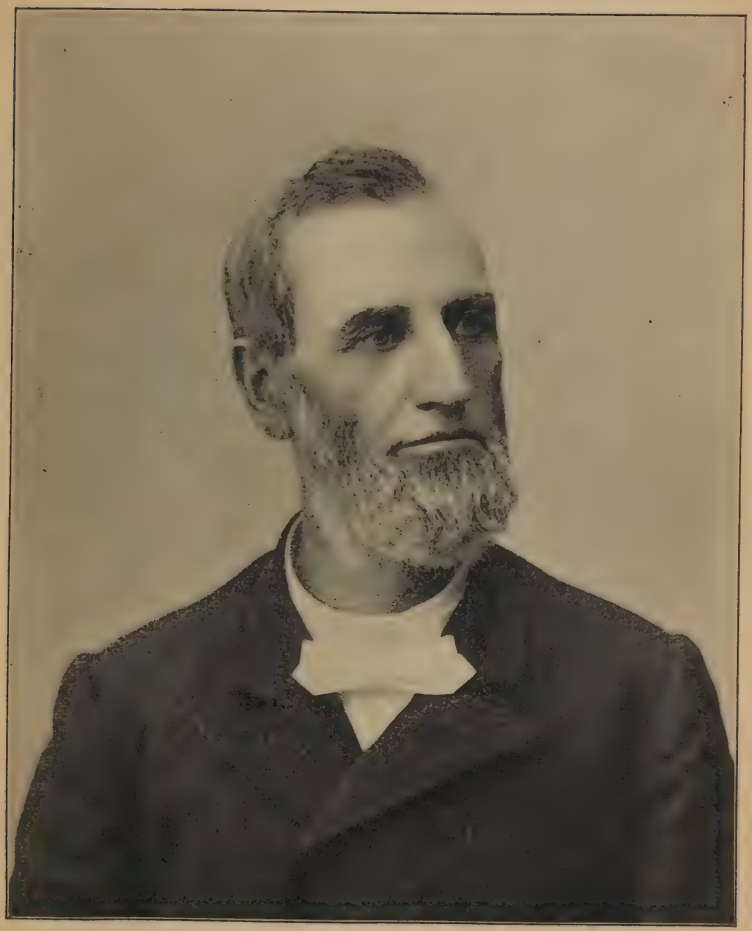
Brother Taylor, himself, was notified to leave the country or a similar fate would overtake him. The feeling of bitterness having taken possession of the masses in Missouri, and growing worse every day, rendered further effort useless, and the new field opening up in Nebraska presenting an opportunity for usefulness free from those obstacles, he deemed it right and wise to cross the river and enter the work in Nebraska, which he did in 1855. His ministry in Missouri till thus interrupted, had been very successful, and has been in Nebraska, but his homespun manners and style of preaching did not altogether suit the taste of the more fastidious people of Omaha, and his pastorate there can hardly be said to have been very successful. But the old hero has, by his cheerful, happy spirit; his inspiring songs, his plain, faithful preaching, contributed largely to the planting of Methodism in Nebraska. There are few, if any, of whom it is more frequently recorded that he was the first to preach the Gospel and organize the Church in the frontier settlements. He has since passed to his reward.

In 1858 W. M. Smith followed Brother Taylor. Of him Haynes says: "Mr. Smith was a man of good gifts for the pulpit, and an able manager of the affairs of the Church; but his sentiments on the question then vexing the Church and nation were un-Wesleyan and provoking to a majority of the people comprising the communicants under his administration. The membership was small, numbering hardly half a hundred, and any subject on which they could not harmonize, and especially the grave one at that time agitating the commonwealth, was next to a disaster, as its direct tendency was to hinder the most successful carrying on of evangelical work. The

bitterness and asperity indulged in mere conversation were adverse to spiritual growth, and engendered animosity which has not yet been outgrown. Mr. Smith's success was not what it should have been, and, most likely would have been, if his views had tallied with a controlling number of his people. Methodism failed for this and other reasons to get a prevailing hold on the citizens and hence suffered for want of adequate support, either financial or moral."

A man now appears on the scene, a devoted man, whose ministry was a great blessing to Omaha. H. T. Davis, D. D., entered the ministry in the Northwest Indiana Conference on trial, in October, 1855. After three years of successful work in that Conference, which was attended with gracious revivals, he felt called to the Western field, and in 1858 wrote W. M. Smith, who was then pastor at Omaha, to that effect, and he at once informed the presiding elder of Brother Davis's wishes. He was offered Bellevue, then vacant. He, as soon as it was possible to make such a move, reported for duty, and entered upon a career that has meant much for the cause of Christ, and especially for Methodism. His experiences in first entering upon his work in Nebraska, will be related more in detail in another part of this volume. His entrance into Omaha, which had already begun to take on city airs, is characteristic both of the man and of the times. Being unable to secure anything better, he secured a lumber wagon drawn by a pair of oxen, to haul his goods to Omaha, and he and Mrs. Davis on the load, drove up Farnam Street to the parsonage.

Dr. Davis was a man of great faith and was constantly expecting great things of the Lord, and soon in-



H. J. Davis

spired his little flock with a like spirit, and they rallied around him, forgetting their political differences, which had become so acute under the administration of his predecessor.

Besides, H. T. Davis was always seen to be a man so pre-eminently of one work, and that work the salvation of souls, that few ever thought to inquire after his political predilection, though his private convictions were well defined. Such a pastor was much needed in Omaha just at this juncture, when political excitement had reached a high pitch. Brother Davis found a debt of five hundred dollars on the church, and the whole community so prostrated financially by the crash of 1857-58 as to make it impossible to raise the money to pay this debt in Omaha. His people gladly gave him permission and he went back among his Indiana friends and soon raised the whole amount.

There is no record of any special revival interest during the first year, and he himself makes no mention in his book of special religious interest during the year, as he most certainly would if there had been. But the following year witnessed a very gracious revival.

H. T. Davis's pastorate being full legal term of two years, carries us to the close of the first period, so further mention of Omaha will be deferred till we come to treat the second period.

CHAPTER III.

FIRST PERIOD. (1854-1861.)

From tracing the history of the beginnings in the centers, we pass to a general survey of the whole. While there is little difference in the date of the first settlements during this first period along the eastern tier of counties, probably with the exception of the Morris settlement noted, we find, as might naturally be expected, that the rich valleys of the Nemahas lying contiguous to the Territory of Kansas, were among the first to be settled. Indeed, as early as April or May, 1854, Christian Bobst and family came with some others from Ohio and settled on the South Fork of the Great Nemaha in the southeastern corner of Pawnee County, near where Dubois now is. These were joined in the following August by the Methodist families of Henry and Jerome Shellhorn. During the summer another settlement was made where Pawnee City now is. When in the early spring of 1855, that sturdy Englishman, David Hart, was appointed to the unorganized region between the Nemahas, he found no class-leader to tell him of spiritual affairs, no committee to estimate or Quarterly Conference to fix his salary, or steward to collect it, but he soon found a warm-hearted welcome to this Methodist neighborhood at South Fork, that had been waiting nearly a year for the coming of the itinerant. Here in the cabin of Henry Shellhorn he preached the first sermon in Pawnee County, and in the

fall of that year he organized the first class in that county, in the cabin of Christian, or Judge, Bobst.

The following named persons constituted this historic class: Judge Bobst, Sarah Bobst, his wife; Mariah Shellhorn, Jerome Shellhorn and his wife, Mary E. Shellhorn. Judge Bobst was class-leader and steward. A characteristic incident which occurred during the summer is related by Brother H. Burch, who was traveling a circuit in Kansas, just across the line, and was at the time visiting Brother Hart's work, having been invited to preach on the Sabbath at the Bobst appointment. The afternoon was rainy and no one was present but the family. They had no sermon, but the opportunity for doing something for the Master was not allowed to pass. Some time was spent in religious conversation, reading the Scriptures, singing and prayer. The pastor had called for their Church letters, but in their moving from Ohio these had somehow got mislaid. During this informal religious exercise good Sister Bobst was wonderfully blessed. The memories of the past and the experience of the present filled her heart so full of joy that it shone out of her countenance. The pastor, quick to perceive these religious expressions, remarked that he guessed Sister Bobst has found her Church letter. "This," writes Brother Burch, "was like the spark to the powder, and there was an explosion of religious joy and acclamations of praise that continued long after we had retired." Thus the fires of spiritual life were burning on the altars of many hearts, ere organization could be accomplished.

A general "history of Nebraska" credits David Hart with organizing the first Methodist Church in Richardson County, at Archer, some time in 1855, which after-

ward became the Church at Falls City, Archer, itself being moved to that place.

There is no reason to believe that Brother Hart was able to effect any organizations other than these two, but doubtless had other preaching places, and was able to report at the Conference of 1856, forty-four full members and six probationers.

These items given by Rev. C. W. Giddings in a History of Nebraska, published in 1882, are of interest. "The Church at Table Rock was organized in 1857, by Rev. C. V. Arnold, a member of the Wyoming Conference, Pennsylvania, and consisted of forty members. The meetings were held for four years at the house of Rev. C. W. Giddings, who had himself just come to Nebraska. But many who came at the first settlement got discouraged by the hard times and in 1858 left, so that out of one hundred and fifty families who had come, during the eighteen months preceding, to make their homes in Table Rock and vicinity, but fifteen families remained."

In 1856 Nemaha Mission is left to be supplied and Brother Burch thinks it was served by a local preacher named King. At the Conference of 1857 there are reported sixty members, an increase over the preceding year. In 1857 Nemaha does not appear, but probably Table Rock takes its place, and is again left to be supplied. Again there is no information in the Minutes as to who supplied, but it was probably C. V. Arnold, who, as before referred to by C. W. Giddings, organized Table Rock Church in 1857. In 1858 Falls City becomes the name of the circuit, with the old hero, J. W. Taylor, as circuit preacher. Thus we see that what was originally Nemaha Mission changed its name twice in three years.

These changes in the names and forms of circuits, occurring frequently in those days, make it difficult and often impossible to trace the growth of any one charge. Brother Taylor reports at the Conference in 1859 forty members. At this Conference there are two circuits formed out of the original Nemaha Mission; Falls City and Table Rock, the former receiving as pastor, Jesse L. Fort, and the latter, J. W. Taylor. It is not unlikely that Beatrice, on the Big Blue, that for the first time appears in the Minutes, included also some of the work in Pawnee County. For Falls City there are reported in 1860, seventy-four members and probationers; and for Table Rock, seventy-two. In 1860 Falls City is left to be supplied, and Table Rock has L. W. Smith, under whose labors there was a great revival.

In the spring of 1857 a steamer was making its toilsome way up the Missouri River, often detained by grounding on sandbars, delaying its journey. Some of those on board, who at the beginning of the trip were entire strangers, soon found that many were headed for Nebraska, and during the trip formed a colony to be located somewhere in the Territory, the exact location to be determined after investigation. After landing at Nebraska City, two committees were sent out to find a suitable place, and their report was submitted to a full meeting of the colony in Omaha. The committee recommended a point on the Big Blue and decided to name the place Beatrice, after one of Judge Kinney's daughters. Among those who were in this colony and were the first settlers of Beatrice, were Judge John F. Kinney, J. B. Weston, and Albert, or "Pap" Towle, as he was known familiarly, and his family. The same boat that brought

this colony to Nebraska brought Bishop Ames to preside at the Kansas-Nebraska Conference at Nebraska City, and Adam Poe to represent the "Book Concern," of which he was one of the agents. Dr. Poe related the following incident, which occurred on the way up the river:

"There was a young man on board who was very officious and curt. He was exceedingly anxious to have a dance. The cabin was cleared, a fiddler employed, and everything was made ready for the hop, when the young man stepped up to a young lady who sat at my side, and after a very polite bow, said: 'Will you dance with me?' 'No, sir; I was better raised,' was the prompt reply. 'And where were you raised?' said the young man, somewhat abashed. 'In the Sunday-school and at the family altar,' calmly replied the young lady. Involuntarily I clapped my hand on her shoulder and said, 'Good!' (Dr. Poe was a tall man, standing six feet in his stockings, and proportionately large in body.) The young man squared himself up, thinking he saw something in my proportions that would do to fight, and then said, 'Well, if we can't have a dance, perhaps we can have a sermon.' 'Yes, sir;' said I. Knowing the bishop could preach much better than I, we put him up, and Bishop Ames gave us one of his best."

The young lady referred to in the above incident is said to have been the daughter of "Pap" Towle, of Beatrice.

D. H. May preached the first sermon in Beatrice in 1858, in Towle's cabin. J. W. Foster was assigned to Beatrice in 1859, being the first pastor ever sent to that place. His circuit included Blue Springs and perhaps

some other points on the Big Blue. He reports at the Conference in 1860 fourteen members.

Brownville was among the first in time on the list of appointments, appearing in 1856, but there was no organization till 1858, the first class being formed by Philo Gorton, in February, 1858. During that winter there was a gracious revival in which some forty or fifty were converted. Dr. Goode and J. T. Cannon assisted the pastor. At London, as early as 1856, a society was formed by J. T. Cannon, consisting of six members, and the following year a log church was built, which was also used for school purposes. J. W. Taylor preached the first sermon at a point where Peru now is, probably some time in 1856, but the first class was formed by Rev. J. T. Cannon, at the house of Geo. K. Pettit, early in 1857. Peru at that time was a part of the Brownville Circuit, and the next year Philo Gorton was pastor, a name which appears for the first time in 1858 and continues well at the front for a few years and then disappears. He did faithful work while he remained.

Tecumseh, in Johnson County, appears in the Minutes for the first time as early as 1857, with H. A. Copeland, who was received on trial that year, as circuit preacher. He reports forty-seven members at the next Conference. At that time Tecumseh itself was little more than a post-office, the number of people never exceeding one hundred until after the war, when a number of old soldiers and others coming in, the town was incorporated in 1865. There were probably a number of appointments on the circuit in 1857, all together making the forty-seven members above referred to. Following Copeland was J. R. Minard, in 1858, who was received on trial that year and

discontinued at his own request in 1859. The fact that the statistics for 1859 are the same as for 1858, being forty-seven members, indicates that Brother Minard made no report, and the figures for 1858 are repeated in 1859. In 1859 Tecumseh Circuit was left to be supplied, and there was reported at the next Conference thirty-nine members, a slight loss, which is probably accounted for by some change in the circuit, or by the rush to the newly discovered gold fields in Colorado, which attracted many from Nebraska, and temporarily depleted our population.

Hiram Burch was succeeded in Nebraska City by D. H. May, who continued two years. Brother Burch reported seventy members and four probationers at the Conference of 1857, and Brother May reports one hundred and forty-eight members and fifty-eight probationers; a very substantial growth in two years, and indicating faithfulness and efficiency on his part. The two Chivingtons now appear in Nebraska City; J. M. as presiding elder of the district, and Isaac as preacher in charge. The membership drops to ninety, with three probationers, a falling off of over half in a single year. In 1860 J. M. Chivington goes to Colorado, and Isaac Chivington becomes presiding elder, with L. D. Price as pastor. There is a note in the Minutes of 1861 stating that "there was no regular preacher last year, hence no report," from which it seems that L. D. Price did not go or did not remain, and this, then the strongest charge, was without a pastor. In Otoe County, besides the work of W. D. Gage, Hiram Burch, and their successors at Nebraska City, we find traces of that hardy pioneer, Z. B. Turman, as early at 1857, as far west as Walnut Creek, near where Syracuse now stands. Jacob Sollen-

burger had taken his family and settled on Walnut Creek as early as 1858, and the McKee family came soon after and a small class was formed by Brother Turman about that time. The permanence and final success of this little struggling society was probably due more to this faithful layman, Jacob Sollenburger, than to any other one person. He was as true as steel and a faithful pastor would always find him a faithful friend and one of the most efficient stewards the Church has had in Nebraska, as the writer learned by experience a few years later. He was one of those stewards who said "something *must* be done." He will appear at a later stage of this history, but always the same earnest, consistent Christian and efficient official in whatever place he was called to fill.

Wyoming, about nine miles north of Nebraska City, was laid out as early as 1855, and was a part of the first Nebraska City Mission, but never developed into anything for Methodism.

A few settlements were scattered along Salt Creek from a point fifteen miles south, and up to the present site of Lincoln, as early as 1857, and these appear in the appointments as Salt Creek Circuit, which is left to be supplied. The following year Z. B. Turman was appointed circuit preacher. Of this devoted pioneer Dr. Davis speaks as follows:

"There were many thrilling events connected with the early history of Brother Turman's work in Nebraska which can but be of very great interest and profit to the reader. At the second session of the Kansas and Nebraska Conference, in 1857, the Salt Creek Mission was formed and Zenus B. Turman was appointed preacher in charge. The first sermon ever preached in Lancaster

County was by Brother Turman. This was in 1857, and in the private house of James Eatherton, some twelve miles south of where the city of Lincoln now stands. The same year he preached the first sermon ever preached on the present site of Lincoln. Salt Creek Mission embraced seven counties, and Brother Turman established sixteen preaching places. The settlements were sparse and confined to the streams and the distance from one to the other was often very great. Over these prairies, under the burning rays of the summer sun, and the fierce winds, blinding storms, and terrible winter blizzards, Brother Turman rode from settlement to settlement, and calling the people together in their rude dwellings, proclaimed to them the Word of Life. All over this part of the State we see to-day the grand results of the sacrifices and toils of this noble man of God. The Church planted by him has arisen in beauty, grandeur, and glory, and we now enjoy its sacred privileges. I have been intimately acquainted with Brother Turman for thirty years, and I have often heard him tell of his work in the State in an early day; but never have I heard a murmur escape from his lips. He has always been a genial, uncomplaining, happy, sunny-hearted minister of the Gospel. The winter of 1858 witnessed one of the most powerful revivals of religion under his labors, near where Louisville now stands, that was ever known in that region of the country. The singing, praying, and rejoicing could be heard for miles away. The people said, 'The only reason why there were not more converted was because there were no more people to convert.' The revival swept the entire community into the Church—men, women, and children."*

*Solitary Places Made Glad.

Salt Creek becomes Saline Circuit and appears as "supplied" in 1859, and only twelve members reported at Conference in 1860. That year W. H. Kendall, who had just been admitted on trial, was appointed to travel it. He reports at the Conference of 1861, only ten members.

Burwell Spurlock, who came to Plattsmouth in 1855, informs me that the first class, of which he was a member, was one that had been formed at Broad Cole's cabin, on what has since been known as the "Perry Walker" farm, two miles southwest of Plattsmouth, there not being enough Methodists in Plattsmouth to form a class. The first pastor was W. D. Gage, whom we have seen was the first pastor ever appointed to a pastoral charge in Nebraska, he having been assigned to Nebraska City Mission in October, 1854. This class at Cole's was very probably a part of this first Nebraska City Mission at that time, but the next year became a part of Rock Bluffs Circuit, organized in 1856, which included Rock Creek, Plattsmouth, Eight Mile Grove, and Mt. Pleasant, with J. T. Cannon as the second pastor.

At the Conference of April, 1857, held at Nebraska City (and the first one held in the Territory), Hiram Burch was appointed to Plattsmouth, which appears for the first time in the minutes. Early in the year he organizes the class at Plattsmouth, of thirty members. The following are some of the names of the first members: Wesley Spurlock and wife, Burwell Spurlock, Stephen Spurlock, Charlotte Spurlock, John Spurlock and wife, Mr. McCarthy and wife, John W. Marshall and wife, and Father Throckmorton and wife. Among these appears the honored name of Burwell Spurlock, who came to Plattsmouth as early as 1855, and has ever since been

an influential and useful member of the Church, for many years at Plattsmouth, and for the last thirteen years he has, along with his wife Isabella, had charge of the Mothers' Jewels Home, at York. His wife was Betty Davis, the daughter of Wade Davis, who was a member of the Morris class, before referred to as the first formed in the Territory, and which was now a part of Plattsmouth Charge. There were three other appointments, one at Rock Bluffs, another at Wade H. Davis's, and a fourth at Eight Mile Grove. For three months Burch also served the Mt. Pleasant Circuit, until supplied by M. Pritchard.

Following Hiram Burch at Plattsmouth, was David Hart, whom we first met in the Nemaha country, preaching where opportunity offered and visiting the people and talking religion in their homes and organizing classes.

David Hart was born in England, November 21, 1821. He was early left an orphan and was apprenticed to a machinist. He was converted at the age of sixteen, and at twenty-one entered the ministry. After spending some years in that thorough training school, the Wesleyan local ministry, he, in 1852, emigrated to America, locating at Jacksonville, Illinois, where his first wife died. In 1854 he came to the Kansas and Nebraska Indian Missions, and, as elsewhere noted, was, in the spring of 1855 assigned to the Nemaha Mission. While at the Indian Mission he became acquainted with one of the teachers, Miss Martha Higley, to whom he was married after completing his work on the Nemahas. He then resided two years in Holt County, Missouri, and did missionary work and assisted in establishing Methodist Churches in Holt, Nodaway, and Andrews Counties. The following trib-

ute to his work and worth is put on record in the Minutes by his brethren in the Conference, who esteemed him very highly:

"Closing his pastorate at Beatrice he was appointed a third time to Plattsmouth. Here his labors in connection with Conference commenced, and here, with failing health, prostrated by his pulpit efforts, his labors closed. Often with his countenance all aglow with heavenly transport, he would exclaim, 'I am ready now, this moment, to depart, if it be the Lord's will.'

"He preached his last sermon from 2 Tim. iv, 6, 7, 8. The text and sermon were a fitting close to his ministerial life. He attended Conference at Omaha last October, took a superannuated relation, and in company with his wife, went to Utah, hoping that a change of climate might so restore health as to enable him to resume labor in that dark, difficult field. He had no desire to live only to be useful, and his zeal in the cause of God could only be quenched by the waters of death. While at Salt Lake City he took part in the services of the Church as far as he was able, greatly to the edification of its members. Leaving there he went to American Fork to spend the winter with his brother-in-law, where, on the 14th of January, 1878, he passed away from earth in holy triumph, exclaiming, 'Glory,' and saying, 'They are waiting. I see them—a great company. Let us go.'

"Brother Hart was a man of strong faith and full of the Holy Ghost, and his preaching was in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. He possessed great energy of character and was unswerving in his adherence to the right. He was ardent in his affections and faithful in all the relations of life. Abundant in labors, he gath-

ered many sheaves into the garner of the Lord and will doubtless have many stars in the crown of his rejoicing."

David Hart was followed at Plattsmouth by Philo Gorton, but of his pastorate there we have no record except that he remained the full term of two years and turned the charge over to his successor in good condition.

Jesse L. Fort is appointed in 1860, and is able to report in 1861, sixty-eight members.

When Brother Burch went to Plattsmouth it was the head of a circuit of four appointments with the strong class in the Davis settlement as one of these. In 1859 this becomes the head of the circut, which reports one hundred and forty-eight at the close of the year. To make this circuit probably the outside appointments were taken off from Plattsmouth, leaving that with Eight Mile Grove and Oreapolis as a charge. Probably Plattsmouth society was having a substantial growth during the years it was seeming to be losing, or barely holding its own, or actually reporting a heavy loss.

Mt. Pleasant was one of the earliest circuits formed and for many years one of the strongest and most desirable circuits. It appears as the head of a circuit for the first time in 1857, and was left to be supplied. Pending the securing of a man for the place, Hiram Burch served it temporarily in addition to his four appointments on the Plattsmouth Charge.

Among the first settlers was W. D. Gage, who had located and taken a claim there as early as 1856, and was living there with his family. In 1856 a stanch Methodist layman, Stephen B. Hobson, long known as "Uncle Stephen," moved into that settlement, and from his daughter, Mrs. J. H. Bates, now residing in California,

and Rev. George Hobson, his son, and other sources, and my own knowledge, I am able to glean a few facts concerning the beginning of the work at Mt. Pleasant and vicinity, and the part their honored father bore in the planting of the afterward flourishing vine.

That same summer that Stephen Hobson settled at Mt. Pleasant (then called Cassville), a Sabbath-school was held in the shade of a large oak-tree near the house of Rewel Davis, conducted by Matthew Hughes, Milton Case, J. F. Buck, and a few others. Mrs. Bates says the first sermon she heard was by W. D. Gage, in an unfinished frame building that afterward belonged to Brannon. That old veteran, Joseph T. Cannon, was the first circuit preacher, having been assigned to Rock Bluff Circuit in 1856, which then included Mt. Pleasant, and indeed all of Cass County and part of Otoe. He preached in the house of Matthew Hughes. In the summer of 1857, Sabbath-school was held in Uncle Stephen Hobson's house, as was also the preaching; and several quarterly-meetings were held there. By much effort a log school-house was built that year, which also served as a place of worship. Though no mention is made of the fact by Mrs. Bates, it is very probable that during J. T. Cannon's pastorate, the first organization of a class was effected, with the Gage and Hobson and other families as members.

It was a characteristic fact that in the home of Stephen Hobson, the infant society was first nursed into strength and begun that career of growth and power and influence, which, for nearly forty years, was equaled by few and excelled by none of the other stations or circuits of Nebraska Methodism. And through all that magnificent

history, Uncle Stephen Hobson was the mainstay of the Church. He was recording steward for thirty-five years, missing but two quarterly-meetings in the first ten years of the history of the charge, and one of these was on account of sickness, and the other was once when serving on a jury. He always made it a point to be on hand in time to pass the bread and water. Not only was he faithful in these official relations, but also in his attendance on the means of grace. The pastor not only expected to see

"UNCLE" STEPHEN AND "AUNT" MARY HOBSON, AT WHOSE HOME THE MT. PLEASANT CLASS WAS ORGANIZED.

him at the preaching service, but was just as sure to find Uncle Stephen in his place at prayer and class meeting. He would never go to town (Plattsmouth, their nearest trading point, twelve miles distant) on Thursday, lest he might not get back in time for prayer-meeting.

It may be truthfully said that all the pastors who have ever served Mt. Pleasant Circuit have reason to thank God for faithful, punctual, sympathetic, helpful Stephen B. Hobson, and his not less devoted wife, "Aunt Mary." The writer looks back to the fact that he was one of those fortunate pastors and Uncle Stephen and Aunt Mary

hold a warm place in his affections and he and his wife will never forget them.

I offer no apology for giving this much space to this layman. He stands as a representative of a class of faithful men and women who helped plant and develop the Church in all parts of Nebraska, and who have been among the Aarons and Hurs who, during the battle, have held up the hands of the leader. I would give equal space to many other men and women of the laity, equally deserving, but can not. For while their deeds of faithful self-sacrifice are on record on high, they are not on earth, and to-day only God knows how much the faithful men and women of the laity have done in the last fifty years for Nebraska Methodism.

In after years Stephen Hobson found by his side such faithful friends and helpers as Bird and family, Brother and Sister John Frew and Flora Frew, Wm. Schleistimeir, Brother and Sister Winslow, and others of like precious memory.

Stephen Hobson raised a family of children who all, early in life, became stanch Methodists, and one son, George A. Hobson, was given to the ministry, and has spent many years in the ranks of the itinerancy. His clear thought and sound preaching have been a blessing to many; and though now on the superannuated list in the Nebraska Conference, because of partial deafness, is still busy along literary lines, and is highly respected by his brethren.

When, as before noted, Mt. Pleasant was made the head of a circuit, Dr. Goode, as he frequently did during his administration, drew on Indiana Methodism for the man to supply the place, and at the end of the first quar-

ter, that stalwart Methodist preacher, Martin Pritchard, entered upon his pastorate at Mt. Pleasant, a circuit with six appointments, and began an honorable career of great usefulness, which was to continue twenty years. It closed in triumph at Peru, March 24, 1877. At the next Conference his brethren pay the following tribute of his work and worth:

"Rev. Martin Pritchard was born in the State of Ohio, April 23, 1827. When seventeen years of age he was converted and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church. About the same time he left home, and without any pecuniary aid from others he secured a good education. He then engaged in teaching, and continued in that employment until he entered the traveling connection. He was licensed as an exhorter when twenty-three years of age, and as a local preacher about two years later.

"In the spring of 1857 he was united in marriage to Miss Mary Howard, and a month or two after came to Nebraska, and was employed as a supply on Mt. Pleasant Mission, by Rev. W. H. Goode, presiding elder of Nebraska District. He at once entered upon his duties as an itinerant with that energy and devotion to his work which so signally characterized his whole career as a minister, and the fruits of his labor gave abundant proof that he was indeed called to the work of the Gospel ministry. At the close of the year he was recommended to the traveling connection, and was received on trial in the Kansas and Nebraska Conference at its session in Topeka, April, 1858. As a preacher he was sound in doctrine, his sermons solid rather than brilliant. His piety was of that cheerful type that caused him to look on

the bright side of life, and rendered him hopeful and happy. During the last two years of his life he was at times a great sufferer. For months together paroxysms of pain were frequent and very severe, but amidst it all he maintained that same cheerful spirit, and was never heard to utter a word of complaint. During his last illness, which continued ten days, his mind and heart was still upon his work; and as late as Thursday, he still thought he would be able to attend his quarterly-meeting on Saturday and Sunday, but when Saturday morning came, the messenger of death came also, and found him ready alike for labor and for rest. When the congestive chill, of which he died, was upon him, stupefying both body and mind, so that he thought and spoke of little that related to earth, he was twice asked if he felt Jesus to be precious, and twice answered with emphasis, 'Yes, O yes,' and soon, with apparently little or no pain, he passed from earth to heaven to join the happy spirit of his cherub child, which only a few hours had preceded him to glory, leaving his family thus doubly bereaved to mourn the loss of a kind and loving husband and father, and this Conference one of the ablest and most efficient members. But while we mourn, we also rejoice—rejoice that he being dead yet speaketh. Though our lamented brother is no more among us, he lives in his labors and in his influence, and his memory is enshrined in our hearts."

Besides what his brethren have noted above of the facts of Martin Pritchard's life and work, there are a few others which in justice ought to be mentioned. It was he who built the first Methodist parsonage in Nebraska, this being erected during his pastorate at Peru in 1860. He also built the first church in Pawnee City.

At the election for the delegates to the General Conference of 1876, Martin Pritchard came within one vote of being elected delegate, W. B. Slaughter and H. T. Davis being the successful competitors. He was twice elected reserve delegate and served four years as a member of the Book Committee, one of the most responsible positions of the Church.

These facts tell of the high esteem in which Martin Pritchard was held by the Nebraska Conference and the Church at large. His wife, and now his widow, is a most noble specimen of beautiful, sanctified, Christian womanhood, and bore well her part as an itinerant's wife.

After Martin Pritchard's two years expired, Rock Bluffs becomes the head of the circuit, and as the name does not appear separately, Mt. Pleasant doubtless remains a part of the Rock Bluffs Circuit till 1862, when it again becomes the head of a circuit. J. T. Cannon is Martin Pritchard's successor, remaining the legal limit of two years. The first year he had (as we have seen) Jacob Adriance as junior preacher, but he was soon sent out to Colorado. The second year Philo Gorton was junior preacher. This being the only circuit that had two men assigned to it, indicates, as do the statistics, that it is the largest and strongest in the Territory. This is in marked and sad contrast with the Rock Bluffs of to-day, where town and Church are extinct.

This will, perhaps, be a suitable place to make further mention of J. T. Cannon, who was Jacob Adriance's senior preacher on the Rock Bluffs Circuit when the latter was taken away for the Colorado work.

Joseph T. Cannon came to Nebraska among the first, and from 1855 he becomes a member of the little band

that during the fifties were laying the foundations of Nebraska Methodism. Mt. Pleasant Circuit and other charges mentioned elsewhere were helped by his faithful labors. After his death his brethren give this brief account of his life and death:

"Rev. Joseph T. Cannon was born in Shelby County, Ohio, September 18, 1814, and died of dropsy in Cass County, Nebraska, July 24, 1883, in the seventieth year of his age.

"His grandfather was a native of Tennessee, and a schoolmate of General A. Jackson. Joseph T. Cannon was converted to God at the age of seventeen. Was married November 7, 1835, to Miss Phoebe Jordon. In 1839 he was licensed to preach, and for fourteen years labored on various circuits in the Missouri Conference as local preacher. In 1851 he joined the Missouri Conference and was ordained deacon by Bishop Waugh, at Hannibal, Missouri. In 1855 he moved to Otoe County, Nebraska, within the bounds of Kansas and Nebraska Conference, and continued in the itinerancy three years. I 1860 he was appointed to pioneer work, and stationed at Central City, Colorado. While there, he, with Rev. Brother Watson (brother to Richard Watson of Methodist fame), erected the first Methodist church in that country. They built it mostly with their own hands, hewing the logs on the mountain side, and carrying them on their shoulders to the site of the church. His labors there told seriously on his health, and he returned to Nebraska, and settled on his farm in Cass County, near the Union Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1870 he was elected to the eighth Legislature of Nebraska, and did his work well. In 1871 his wife died, in the blissful hope of heaven, leaving a

husband and three children to mourn their loss. In 1874 he married Miss Mary S. Daley.

"As a preacher, Brother Cannon was moderate in speech, concise and practical. In the Conference he enjoyed the respect of all, and was highly esteemed by those who knew him best. As a Christian he was quiet, thoughtful, patient, and persevering. He suffered much by disease, which sometimes brought clouds and disappointments to his mind, but never did he lose confidence in his God. His end was peaceful and grandly triumphant. He even exulted in the approaching hour, and passed gently away to his reward, leaving a wife and little son, Wallace, and three adult married children. Thus Brother Cannon lived long, labored much, and died triumphantly."

CHAPTER IV.

FIRST PERIOD. (1854-1861.)

As early as 1856-57 town site companies and other speculative organizations, confidently expecting that a railroad would soon be constructed along the Platte Valley, induced people to form settlements and start towns as far west as Hall County. Beginning with Dodge and Platte Counties, we have the towns of North Bend, Fremont, and Columbus, started in the order named. In 1857 a large German colony had also settled in Hall County, at the mouth of Wood River, farther west than any other settlement, being about 150 miles west of the Missouri River.

These settlers must have the Gospel, and as early as 1857 North Bend which probably included Columbus and intermediate points, was among the appointments named in the Minutes, but was left to be supplied. About this time another town was platted, east of North Bend, which was destined to become the most important city in the State west of Omaha, and the Methodist Church at that place has ever been and is now, one of the most influential in the State. Of the founding of this town and Church I shall let Mrs. Ida Moe tell the story:

"In the sultry month of August, 1856, there set out from the rough territorial capital called Omaha, a group of young men filled with a very definite purpose.

"Following the grass-walled road which in the past

had been the trail of the Indian, the explorer, the Mormon, and was destined to become in the immediate future the natural highway of the freighter, the emigrant, and the engineer, they halted about forty miles to the west, and with chain, chart, and tripod ran out the lines and set the stakes that outlined the site of a new town. A sea of prairie grasses billowing in the wind, the level valley of the Platte stretched away, four miles to the bluffs on the north, one to the river in the south, to the horizon on the east and the west.

"In June, John C. Fremont had been made the nominee of the Republican party. Being ardent partisans and most of them of that political faith, the founders of the infant burg bestowed upon it the name of the picturesque and popular presidential candidate.

"Among the half-dozen families who were the first settlers was that of a Congregational minister, Rev. Isaac E. Heaton. A good man and a scholar, he was held in deep esteem by his fellow-citizens and his subsequent long and godly life was felt to be a benediction to the community. But those who had been adherents of other forms of faith were early desirous of establishing their own Church organization and soon began to break away from the common fold.

"Two brothers, Eliphus H. and Lucius Henry Rogers, had been reared in a Methodist parsonage and were eager to enjoy the service of God in accordance with their own mode of worship. This desire led to the formation in 1857 of a class consisting of five members: E. H. Rogers, his wife, Lucy J. Rogers, L. H. Rogers, Mrs. Mary A. Flor, a young woman who had come with her husband from Wisconsin, Mrs. Wealthy Beebe, a widow who with

her four sons had settled upon a claim three miles west of the village.

"E. H. Rogers was the first leader, and except when absent for brief intervals, continued to sustain that relation until his death. The first pastor was Rev. Jerome Spillman, who had been assigned to Fontanelle Mission, of which Fremont constituted one appointment."

This is the first appearance of this flaming evangelist in Nebraska. He was born and converted and educated in Indiana. Indiana Methodism at that time, as it had ever been, was of the most aggressive type, and was led by men who were giants in intellectual stature and full of the Holy Ghost, mighty in word and deed. Among these Jerome Spillman received his first inspiration, and imbibed his ideals of Methodism "as Christianity in earnest." He was pursuing the course of study at old "Asbury," under the great Dr. Cyrus Nutt, who was then president. After a few years of college life, and before graduation, he heard the call for men to plant Methodism in Nebraska, and reported to J. M. Chivington for work. The following letter will explain how Jerome Spillman was initiated into the work, and will illustrate how presiding elders supplied these fields as the needs demanded:

"Omaha, June 22, 1857.

"E. H. Rogers, Esq.,—Dear Brother: This will introduce to you Rev. Jerome Spillman. I have employed him on the Fontenelle and North Bend Missions. He is a young man, as you will see; still he is full of fire, and will do you good service. He is just now from Indiana Asbury University (of the junior class), is a good scholar and will prosecute his studies until he graduates. Board

him if you can. I will be out on the eleventh of July. Kind regards to yourself and family. Yours truly,

"J. M. Chivington."

As stated in Mrs. Moe's account, Brother Spillman soon had a class organized. Meetings were held at the home of E. H. Rogers. Under these humble conditions, with a membership of five, began the history of one of the most prosperous Churches in the State. This Church from the first was blessed with the membership of strong, zealous, and influential laymen. The two Rogers, E. H. and L. H., were from the first marked men in the community, and leaders in every legitimate enterprise that promised to promote the interests of the place and Church. From the first and as long as they lived, they were a tower of strength in the struggling Church. They were the sons of Rev. L. C. Rogers, an honored member of the old Oneida Conference in New York. E. H. Rogers was born in Litchfield, New York, January 12, 1830, and Lucius H. Rogers was born March 20, 1834. These two men will often appear in the story of our Church in Nebraska, and always in some honorable relation, or some important work.

Fontenelle, on the Elkhorn, some twelve miles north of Fremont, was one of the oldest towns in the State, though now almost entirely defunct. But during those early years it was a place of some importance, with a population of two hundred, and much promise, and unlimited expectations. It appears among the appointments in the Minutes of 1856, and was left to be supplied. J. A. Wilson was employed as a supply, but failed to appear, and the charge was served that Conference year by

M. M. Haun, who reported fifteen members. Then, as we have seen, Jerome Spillman was sent to supply Fontenelle, which it seems, from Chivington's letter, included both Fremont and North Bend. At Fontenelle he had a gracious revival, the first of a series which attended his ministry in Nebraska. There seems not to have been any revival at Fremont or North Bend, probably for lack of suitable places to hold special meetings. Brother Spillman reported forty-five full members and twenty-eight probationers, where the year before there had been but fifteen. The name of North Bend appears in the Minutes in 1857 as being left "to be supplied," but as seen by Presiding Elder Chivington's letter, it was included in Jerome Spillman's field. It was little more than one of the numerous paper towns, though $60,000 worth of lots had been sold, mostly to Eastern purchasers. When Jacob Adriance was appointed to Platte Valley Circuit in 1858, it extended from Fremont to Columbus, and included North Bend and Buchanan.

The work in Sarpy County began with Bellevue Circuilt, which included Fairview and all the points in the county, and appears for first time in 1857, to be supplied, and was also left to be supplied in 1858, and, as already noted, H. T. Davis was placed in charge at that time. In 1859, Jerome Spillman, that flaming evangelist, whose labors were everywhere attended with great revivals, fresh from his victories at Fontenelle, was assigned to Bellevue. There was a great revival and the membership which had been reported at the Conference of 1858 as ten, and in 1859 as nine, was reported at the end of Jerome Spillman's first year to be sixty-two, with eighty-two probationers. It was at this meeting that T. B.

Lemon, who, after some years of efficient labor in the Baltimore Conference, had come West and gone into the practice of law, was recalled to his duty as a minister of the Gospel. In 1860, Jerome Spillman is returned to Bellevue, with J. H. Alling as junior preacher, and reports in 1861 one hundred and eleven members and sixty-four probationers, showing that the revival of the previous year left permanent results.

Of Spillman's preaching, Judge A. N. Ferguson, of Omaha, son of Judge Fenner Ferguson, the first chief justice of the Territory, has this to say: "I was but a boy of sixteen at that time, but I often heard Spillman during that great revival and at other times, and no preacher that I have heard in Nebraska has impressed me more profoundly than did Jerome Spillman." His powerful preaching and great revivals were still matters often referred to when the writer came to Nebraska in 1865. He went into the service of his country early in the Civil War, as chaplain, Plattsmouth and Oreapolis being his last charge in Nebraska, to which he was appointed in 1861. After the war he remained in the South.

When in 1856 Isaac Collins was changed from Omaha to Florence, after having served the full term of two ecclesiastical years at Omaha, though not two full calendar years, the town was flourishing and still hopeful. There had been a church built at Omaha; there must be one built at Florence. This Collins undertook during the inflated times pending just then. But before it could be completed the financial crash of 1857-58 came, and money became scarce. But they felt the building must now be completed, and five hundred dollars were borrowed at five per cent a month, the pastor going on the

note with some others. This rate of interest may seem incredible now, but was common then, as were even higher rates. By the time of the next Conference, 1858, when Hiram Burch was appointed to succeed Collins, the case had become hopeless, the principal and interest on the note already amounting to more than the cost of the building, and the people having lost heavily, there was nothing left but to do that which a Methodist preacher hates to do, acknowledge defeat. They accepted an offer of the creditors to take the building and cancel the note. These afterward sold the building to the school district, and it was still used for religious services.

After a year of discouraging work in a town that was constantly losing ground, Brother Burch was returned; Calhoun, DeSoto, and Cuming City being added to Florence, and the name of the circuit changed to DeSoto. Fort Calhoun, DeSoto, and Cuming City were very similar in their fortunes and history to that of Florence. They flourished for a few years, and then declined. Isaac Collins, while at Omaha, preached at Calhoun once in four weeks, and even went occasionally as far as DeSoto, twenty miles from Omaha. These places had, during their brief history, the services of some of the ablest and most efficient preachers, such as Isaac Collins, H. Burch, Jerome Spillman, Jacob Adriance, T. B. Lemon, and in the early sixties, J. B. Maxfield and A. G. White. But manifest destiny was stronger than even these strong men, and these places became defunct in a few years. But during the fifties they kept their places in the list of appointments. During Burch's second year there were some gracious revivals and the Church made gratifying

progress. Brother Burch continued to preach at Florence, though the Baptists and Presbyterians had abandoned the field. The town continued to run down, and the faithful work of Collins and Burch came to naught, as was often the case in those times of shifting fortunes. While Brother Burch was in a revival-meeting at Calhoun, the following sad incident occurred, as related by Dr. Goode, who had stopped on his way home to assist:

"We now approach a scene of deep and painful interest; one which, in its results, was greatly to affect my future life and labors. Hitherto, in all my wanderings and toils, I had always had a devoted and willing participant. Home had been cheered and made a resting-place, with a society and companionship all that I desired. Absence had been relieved by the reflection that the family altar was kept up, the morning and evening sacrifice offered, the interests and comfort of dependent ones provided for, and all the details of secular business and domestic care guided by a competent and faithful hand. A counselor, too, and friend, had been near me in every hour of impetuosity or of discouragement; diffident, unobtrusive, but judicious, constant, gentle, faithful.

"The opinion had seemed to be mutually, though rather silently, entertained that I, though possessing more firmness of physical constitution, should first be called away; and all the arrangements of later years had contemplated this event. For this I had endeavored to have my "house in order." But how vain are all our plans founded upon mere presentiment. 'God's ways are not our ways, nor His thoughts our thoughts.' A cup was prepared for me of which I had never expected to drink.

"Upon the morning of the third of February, 1859,

I started upon the northern portion of my fourth round of quarterly-meetings. The trip would take me to the extreme of the district and occupy several weeks. All at home were well and cheerful. My meeting at De-Soto was attended. On the morning of Thursday, the 9th, my last day in Tekama, the family scene at home had been as usual. My wife, according to her uniform custom in my absence, had assembled the household at an early hour, read the Holy Scriptures, the portion for that morning being Psalm cxlvi, bowed with her children, and commended them to God in prayer. A few hours passed in household avocations, when, while seated at her needle she was suddenly attacked with violent illness. Medical aid was immediately called, but in vain. The disease baffled medicine, and almost from the first precluded hope. On the morning of the 14th, God released her sanctified spirit and took her to Himself.

"My supposed great distance, and the want of knowledge of my route, prevented my being sent for, though in reality I had passed most of the time of her illness within one day's ride of home. Reaching Omaha in the afternoon, where I had expected to pass the night, I heard of her illness, and in ten minutes after of her death. A solitary, but hasty, night ride of twenty-five miles brought me to my home at a late hour. Unknowingly, I passed into a room where my eyes rested upon the precious remains, before I had seen a living being about the house.

"Reason remained unimpaired to the last. Under the most racking torture, perfect patience and resignation were exercised. Not a murmur escaped. Eight children were at her bedside. During the illness she had all ob-

jects removed out of sight which reminded her of unfinished plans and contemplated domestic arrangements, saying, 'I shall work no more,' calmly gave directions about her household affairs, even the most minute, inquired kindly after the health of some that were indisposed, thanked attending friends for their good offices, and expressed a fear that she should be troublesome or grow impatient, gave instructions for preparations for her funeral, addressed personally each of her children present, sent her last words to the absent one, and charged all to meet her in heaven, enjoined them to be 'kind to their father,' left a most tender and consoling message for myself, referring to my expectation that she would survive me, 'Tell him not to grieve—we shall meet soon,' exclaiming near the last, 'O that I could see Mr. G. once more!' From the first her confidence was firm and repeatedly expressed. Almost the last words uttered were two lines of a hymn often sung in our family worship:

> "'Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
> Let me hide myself in Thee!'"

It was in the spring of 1857 that there appeared on the field a young man who was destined to play a large part in the planting of Methodism in Nebraska and Denver, Colorado.

Jacob Adriance was born in Cayuga County, New York, October 22, 1835. His parents were members of the Dutch Reformed Church, but afterward joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. When Jacob was ten years of age his parents moved to Niagara County, New York, where he grew up to manhood. He attended the district school and three terms at the Wilson Collegiate Institute.

He was religiously inclined from childhood, but thought he must wait until grown up before acknowledging it openly, hence did not become a Christian until he was sixteen, when he was converted. Two years later he felt called to preach the gospel, but the call included the additional idea that it should be a long way from home. Though he says he was as conscious of the call as if some person had spoken, he, like Jeremiah, and probably every truly called prophet of God, hesitated from a sense of inadequacy, saying, "I can't do that, I have no qualifications as to gift of speech, or education for so great a task." After thus resisting the call for more than a year, conscientious Jacob Adriance surrendered and said, "Yes, Lord, I'll go." Having had a license to preach pressed upon him, and armed with a government land warrant for 160 acres of land, the gift of his father, on the seventh of April, 1857, at the age of twenty-two, he turned his face toward the mighty West, that country afar off where it seemed stipulated in his call to the ministry that he should in after years "make full proof of his ministry."

He reached Nebraska City April 26th, a day after the Conference had adjourned. He then walked to Glenwood to see Dr. Goode, and thence to Omaha to see the presiding elder of the Omaha District. It was characteristic of this modest man that his highest ambition up to that time was to assist some pastor, and when offered sole charge of DeSoto Mission, he shrank from the responsibility, and only after considerable pressure did he consent to go, and entered upon his work. Instead of entering a quarter section of land with his land warrant, he sold it for $163 that he might have the means to procure a horse and other outfit necessary for an itinerant

circuit rider in Nebraska. A good brother gave him a pair of saddle-bags. He had less than twenty dollars left after these purchases, and this was soon spent for Sunday-school libraries, as we shall see. The presiding elder had taken a map and showed him nine appointments which were to constitute his circuit, including, besides DeSoto, Cuming City, Tekamah, and Decatur, some other towns. He says of the other towns the good elder had shown him on the map, they had either gone into the river or were mere paper towns. Methodism had not as yet a single class organized on this field, much less churches and parsonages, nor was any other Church organized. Nothing had been raised the year before but a little sod corn, but most of the settlers had come too late for even that. There were not to exceed one hundred people in any one of these four towns, though each were hopeful of a great future. Decatur was then confidently expecting a railroad and is still in a receptive mood after nearly fifty years of waiting. Brother Adriance was the first regular pastor of these places, and his first service was on May third, at DeSoto, in the home of Jacob Carter, a Baptist. He found but two Methodists, T. W. Carter and P. S. Sprague. But he organized a Sunday-school on the 12th of July, 1857, purchasing a library for the same of Rev. Moses F. Shinn, of Omaha, who was then Sunday-school agent of the Iowa Conference. T. W. Carter had organized a Sunday-school as early as 1856, the first in Washington County, but it had gone down. The following winter he held extra services, and there were three conversions. While Isaac Collins was assisting in holding these meetings, a rather ludicrous incident occurred, which well illustrates the spirit of the

times. Perhaps the form of amusement the Methodist preachers most frequently came in conflict with in all those earlier days, was the dance, usually so prevalent in newly settled countries. The meetings were producing a profound impression on the community and threatened to break up the dancing business entirely. Some of the leaders in that amusement determined to take vengeance on the preachers, and if possible, break up the meeting. Finding a small, dead dog, these hoodlums slipped up to the house, and while Brother Collins was preaching, hurled the dead carcass through an open window, striking him in the back. The dead canine was removed, and except a ripple of excitement, the meeting went on as usual, the sermon was finished, and victory was on Israel's side.

With the two Methodists which Jacob Adriance found at DeSoto and those converted at the meeting, and some others who came in later, he, by the close of the Conference year, organized a class of twenty-two with a Brother Harney as leader. This was the first class organized at this place.

On the same Sabbath that Jacob Adriance opened his mission in Nebraska at DeSoto, on the morning of the 3d of May, 1857, he preached at Cuming City in the evening, in a log cabin without any door. A local preacher from Iowa, by the name of L. F. Stringfield, had been over in the fall of 1856 and preached a few times, but no organization had been effected. Finding seven Methodists, Adriance organized a class, appointing H. Benner class-leader. This is the first class he ever organized, but it was not the last. On the 17th of May he organized a Sunday-school and again purchased a li-

brary of M. F. Shinn, packing the same on his pony from Omaha to Cuming City, a distance of over thirty miles.

At Tekamah, in Burt County, he found that that zealous local preacher, L. F. Stringfield, had preceded him, preaching a few times in the fall of 1856. A general history of Nebraska states that in 1854 the first sermon ever preached in Tekamah was by a Methodist preacher, but gives no name.* In 1855, Rev. Wm. Bates, a local preacher who lived near Tekamah, preached a few times. His brother, Rufus Bates, was an enthusiastic and efficient choir leader, and for many years rendered valuable service along that line. This same history states that Springfield organized the Methodist Church in 1856, but Adriance found no trace of the organization. He says that he found eleven members, and organized the first class ever formed there. This is probably correct, or if there was a class formed in 1856, it had been allowed to lapse, as was sometimes the case. Wm. Bates, a local elder, was appointed class-leader. Brother Adriance's first service was at the house of Benjamin Folsom, whose wife was a stanch Methodist and deeply pious Christian. The other members of this historic class, the only one of those formed by this faithful pastor on this circuit that has remained permanent till this day, was Michael Ohlinger and wife, Adam Ohlinger, and John Oaks, afterward the founder of Oakland. Here he also organized a Sunday-school May 24th, purchasing a library and packing it up from Omaha on his pony. The class doubled in numbers during the year. At Decatur Brother Adriance found a population of about fifty, but at that time no Methodists, and though he preached there regularly, could

* This was probably W. D. Gage.

effect no organization. His first service was on a week night, May 7, 1857, at the hotel, with ten persons present.

In reviewing the year's work, he says: "I held no extra services, except at DeSoto, for want of a place; there were no public rooms available, and dwellings were small and full. The year with me was one of many severe trials, both of body and soul, but of many experiences that were helpful to me in after years. I found twenty-two members; I left forty-six." He found not a single organization of Church or Sunday-school. He left a fairly well organized circuit, out of which has since grown several strong charges, among them Blair and Tekamah. Like Paul, he laid the foundations which others have built upon. His last Quarterly Conference renewed his license, and recommended him for admission on trial into the traveling connection, which was done at the Conference in 1858 at Topeka.

Jacob Adriance is one of those unassuming men that rarely pass for all they are worth. But all soon came to respect and believe in him as a pure-minded, sincere Christian man. His preaching had little of the arts of oratory or embellishments of fine rhetoric, but possessed that element of genuineness and sincerity that all orators must have if they would be permanently successful. His messages of truth came straight from a warm, sympathetic heart, and his hearers felt that he was seeking them, not theirs. His preaching was effective chiefly in building up believers in the faith, but his ministry was also attended with many precious revivals and he will have many stars in his crown. Besides, he was gifted with a wonderful power of song, that added greatly to his usefulness. He was in demand at camp-meetings,

where his singing was deeply impressive. Brother Burch tells of his being at the camp-meeting at Carrolls Grove, in Cass County, in 1857, where among other songs which he rendered in a most impressive manner was one entitled, "The Prodigal Son," during which the congregation was a good deal stirred. Thus Jacob Adriance has been permitted to sing the gospel as well as preach it, and only eternity will reveal the number that have been saved or helped through his twofold ministry.

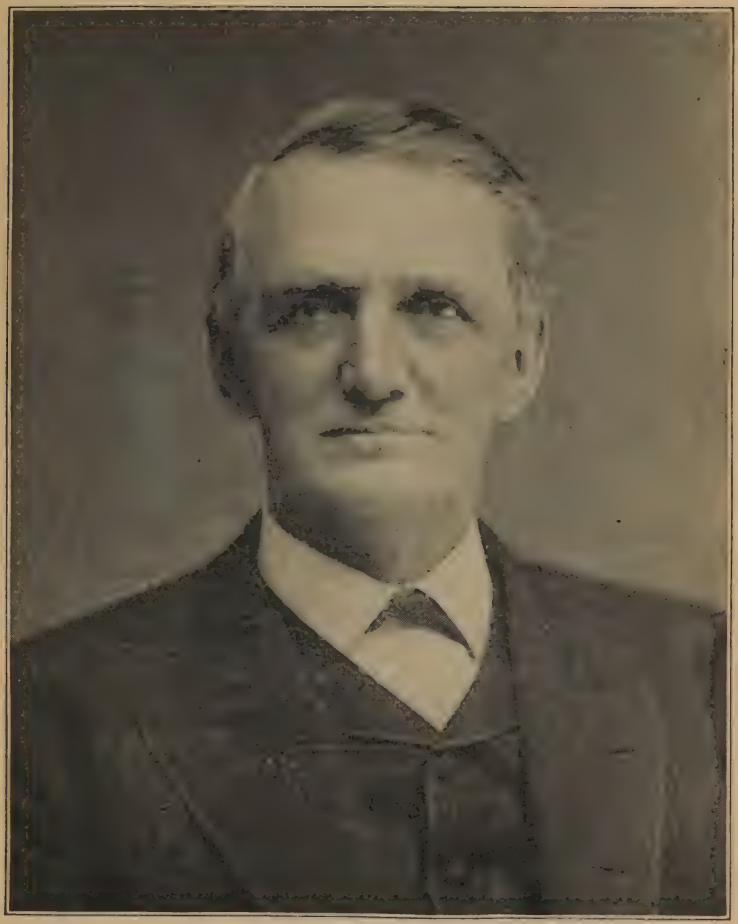
Adriance was followed on the DeSoto Mission by Jerome Spillman. The circuit presumably included the same points as the year before, though we have no means of knowing certainly about this, circuits being subject to change in their boundaries at any time, as the exigencies of the work demanded. Knowing what we do of Jerome Spillman we can hardly conceive of his spending a year on a circuit without a revival at one or more of his appointments, yet the Minutes show no gain on DeSoto Circuit during that year. The following year, as we have seen, DeSoto was served by Hiram Burch, and Tekamah, which probably included Decatur and other points, appears in the list as a separate circuit "to be supplied." There is no means of knowing who, if any one, was found to supply it, and the statistics for that year show no growth in membership.

The following year, 1860, Z. B. Turman, whom we have already found at the front in other places doing valiant service, is sent to Tekamah, and as might be expected, the membership is more than doubled. The next year after Brother Burch's pastorate, on the DeSoto Circuit, the name of the circuit is again changed, and it appears in the Minutes of 1860 as "Calhoun, to be supplied."

The man found to supply this hard field was no less a personage than T. B. Lemon, who now appears for the first time in the work in Nebraska and is destined to fill a large place in the next twenty-five years. During this, his first pastorate, a great revival takes place at old DeSoto, transforming the whole neighborhood.

John E. West, now a resident of Crawford, Nebraska, was then living at DeSoto. He sometimes accompanied Brother Lemon, and told the writer the following characteristic incident that occurred when visiting one of the appointments of the circuit at a school-house a little south of Fort Calhoun. The weather was cold, there was no stove up and they had to go two miles to find pipe with which to put one up. Only two besides themselves came to the service, but Brother Lemon preached with all the unction and power that characterized his preaching when large audiences listened to him.

Omadi, or what is now Dakotah City, at that time being off by itself to the north of the Omaha Indian Reservation, appears on the list from 1856 to 1867, when it drops out till 1869. The first two years it is left to be supplied. As there is no report of any kind at the Conference of 1857, it was probably not supplied in 1856, but at the Conference in 1858, nine members and three probationers are reported, and $382 out of a claim of $800 is reported paid, by William M. Smith. But the place being isolated, there are no other points within reach to combine with it and make a circuit. This would make it difficult to supply it. The first regular pastor sent from the Conference was A. J. Dorsey, who had just been admitted on trial in the Conference. Of his work we know little, except that he found twelve members and proba-



J. B. Lemons

tioners and reported twenty-eight; was promised $100 and reports all paid. He is discontinued at his own request at the next Conference. A. J. Dorsey is followed by T. M. Munhall, who reports in 1860 seventeen members and probationers, and $213 received out of the $300 promised. There appears on this field, now Dakotah City, one who has just been received on trial, W. A. Amsbary, this being probably his first charge. He reports fourteen members and sixteen probationers, which indicate some revivals, and it would be strange if there were none with W. A. Amsbary pastor.

The first quarterly-meeting was held on this distant field by J. M. Chivington in 1857, and during the summer of 1858 W. H. Goode made the trip and in his book gives an account of it, which is well worth quoting. It will be seen what it meant to be a presiding elder in those days, and especially what a trip to Dakotah City meant. He says:

"My first trip to this upper region occupied a portion of May and June. Most of the bridges had already gone; the direct road had to be abandoned and a way sought over the bluffs. About one hundred miles up, among the Black Bird Hills, is the Omaha Reserve, fronting some thirty miles up the river, through which we must pass to the upper settlements. In the forks of the Black Bird Creek is the Omaha village, heretofore described. The two bridges were gone, and both streams were swollen steep-banked, miry, and dangerous to pass. Arrived at the first I found a group of lazy, lounging Indians sunning themselves on the opposite shore, and awaiting the approach of some luckless traveler. By signs and words I inquired where I should cross. The wily savages

pointed me to a place into which they tried to induce me to drive; expecting probably, to see some sport and to realize a fee for helping me out of my difficulty. Being a little suspicious, I waited for a time. At length an honest-looking fellow came along, and pointed me the way to a place of less difficulty, thereby depriving them of the sport and profit, and saving me from difficulty and danger. It being late in the afternoon when I got over these streams, I sought a lodging at the Government Farm and agency, but was denied. In vain did I present my vocation and object; I could not obtain the privilege even of sleeping upon the floor, and finding my own provisions, but was directed to an Indian tavern some miles off. Not relishing this, I drove off, planning for a night in the woods by my own campfire. Soon I found that my trail entered a vast tract covered with water of unknown depth, perhaps for miles. I endeavored to pass around, but was hemmed in and had to 'take water.' In I drove, committing myself to the floods. It proved of fordable depth, though of long and tedious continuance. Emerging from the floods, I espied through the forest, the stately stone mansion of the Presbyterian Station. Approaching and giving my name and position, I was kindly met by the superintendent, Rev. Dr. Sturgiss, and his excellent lady, recognized as a missionary and a brother, formed an interesting acquaintance, and ever after had a welcome and pleasant home among them. Thanks to the churl that turned me off an hour before."*

Jacob Adriance attended his first Conference at Topeka, making a journey of over one hundred and fifty miles to reach the seat of Conference. He was received on trial and appointed to Platte Valley Mission. Of how

*Outposts of Zion.

he gets from Tekamah to his new circuit and his experiences and description of the work he does, except that of Fremont, which is described elsewhere, I will let Brother Adriance himself tell the story:

"I was appointed at the Conference of 1858 to the Platte Valley Mission, embracing Fremont and the settlements west, including Monroe on the Loup Fork, fifty-eight miles distant from Fremont. Fremont had a population of one hundred. My first service, May 2, 1858. The following week I moved my two trunks from Tekamah, with my pony and a one-horse wagon. At Bell Creek ford, as the water would come into my wagon-bed, I made a bridge with it and a tree, and packed my trunks over. One day, as I had no bucket, I carried water to my pony in my hat.

"North Bend had six families in the vicinity; it was a paper town, from which, it was said, $60,000 worth of lots had been sold. The town site was afterward turned into a farm, and later the present town laid out. My first service here was June 6, 1858. George Turton and Harriet, his wife, were the only Methodists here.

"Buchanan was also a paper town located on the old military road at Shell Creek; six families in this vicinity, mostly strong Universalists. My first service was on June 6th. They were intelligent, kind people, but objected to me having family prayer, yet wished me to have public services in their houses.

"Skinners was a settlement of five families. Mr. Skinner and wife were Methodists, living ten miles east of Columbus. My first service here was on June 20th, at 7 P. M., and as one family did not arrive until services closed, they having come four miles with their ox-

team, I held another service, making four sermons and twenty-two miles ride in the hot sun for the day.

"Columbus had a population of about one hundred, mostly Germans, no Methodists; first service May 16th, with twenty-four persons present.

"Monroe. Here there were two families and ten or twelve single men keeping 'bach.' First service May 16th, with fifteen persons present. At one service here, all were away but two men. I stopped with them for the night and preached to them in the morning as best I could, having come fifty-eight miles to do it. I think these were the first religious exercises held at the five places named. I kept up the appointments regularly during the year and organized the North Bend class, with George Turton leader; six members, including a Sister Stephens living three miles above Columbus. Thus the class was thirty-six miles long.

"Jalapa, on Maple Creek, eight miles north of Fremont, was my sixth appointment, and a settlement of four families. O. A. Himebaugh was the proprietor of the townsite, a Methodist, and later the first settler in Hooper, where he was active in building up Methodism. He died September, 1902.

"The Fontenelle work was left to be supplied; June 29th Brother Goode put me in charge of it, in addition to present work. A church had been built the preceding winter, 1858, with native material, except the flooring and siding, which was hauled by wagon from St. Joe, Missouri, costing $100 per thousand. In later years it was taken down and rebuilt at Arlington. The leading Methodist families were those of S. Terances, Keeys, Hancock, and Van Horn.

"As early as possible the settlements on the Elkhorn were visited. (From my diary.) October 19th, preached at Mr. Todds, at Logan Ford; seven persons present; entire settlement. October 20th, at DeWitt, thirty-eight miles from Fontenelle; nine present, of whom Amzi Babitt was a Methodist. There were two Wesleyans, one Presbyterian, and one Baptist; entire settlement out; failed to organize. The 21st, at West Point; one family and six men in the settlement; five present. Twenty-second at Hunters, Cuming Creek ford, five present, the entire settlement. No services at fords since I left. At West Point Methodism has never succeeded, and last Conference ordered our property there to be sold. On December 6, 1858, I found a settlement of three families, eight grown persons and two children, all in one cabin, twenty-five miles from Fontenelle on Logan Creek, where Oakland is now located. February 21, 1859, four of them joined on probation, and March 21st, one more, so a class of five was organized, with the mother of the four daughters class-leader. Sister Arlington had been a Presbyterian in Philadelphia, but made a good leader and kept up their Sabbath prayer-meetings for over two years. No settlers coming in and being so isolated from society, they finally abandoned their claims with the improvements, and re-located in Burt County, six miles south of Decatur, where Sister Arlington died a few months ago, upwards of ninety years old. I did not attempt to hold special meetings, but kept up the appointments, thirteen in number, and at different times traveling over three hundred miles in one round in four weeks; often without a trail; by the sun and by my watch; at times in storms keeping the pony's neck straight and sighting between his

ears to objects a little in advance. Dangerous risks were avoided, yet at one time Logan ford was crossed by sitting on my feet on the top of the saddle, with saddle-bags over my shoulders, and the water running over the pony's back. It was to cross or go back ten miles."

At the Conference of 1859 he is appointed junior pastor on Rock Bluff Circuit, with the old veteran, J. T. Cannon, as senior preacher. This was the strongest charge numerically in the territory, having a membership of 143, being the only one that had over one hundred members. Doubtless the arrangement of being the junior preacher was much to the liking of this modest young man, but it was not to last long. He was soon summoned, along with Dr. Goode, to a far distant, and as subsequent events proved, a far harder and more important field, referred to elsewhere. Of the work of Jacob Adriance in Denver, it being in another field, little can be said in a volume treating of Nebraska Methodism, still I can not forbear a few quotations from that excellent history of our Church in Colorado, by Isaac H. Beardsley, D. D., entitled "Mountain and Plain," as showing the nature of the work, the character of the man, and the high regard in which he is deservedly held by Denver and Colorado Methodists. Of their arrival at Denver and the first service, Dr. Beardsley says:

"Brother Goode drove his four-mule team into Denver at half-past two P. M., on Tuesday, June 28, 1859; Brother Adriance following on his pony. They had six months' provisions for two. Their trip had been one of great fatigue and exposure during the twenty-eight days en route. After putting up notices for preaching on the

following Sabbath, they drove four miles up the Platte to get feed for their animals.

"Allen Wiley's motto was theirs, 'Methodist preachers are in a pushing world, and they must push also.' Experience soon taught them that the best way to get a crowd was to sing it up. Their first service was held July 3, 1859, in Pollock's Hotel. This was a frame building, one of the three or four only in the two towns of Auraria, now West Denver, and Denver City. This house stood on the east side of Eleventh Street, between Wazee and Market Streets. Brother Goode preached at eleven A. M., and Brother Adriance at three P. M. The congregations were small, the people not caring for these things."

And of his marriage we find this: Again I quote from Brother Adriance's letter to the writer and others: "How glad I was to meet the brethren, and have some ministerial society. It was like an oasis in the desert. I was nearly overcome with joy. After Conference I went back to New York to visit my parents and friends. There I found a girl willing to become a missionary's wife." (There is a slight touch of romance and heroism about this match. She was Miss Fanny A., daughter of L. C. Rogers, of the Central New York Conference. Just seventeen days after their first meeting they were married and started for the "Pike's Peak" country.) "On our return we crossed the plains at the rate of twenty-eight to thirty miles a day, reaching Golden about the first of July, and began housekeeping in a little cabin, twelve by fourteen feet, with no floor, one door, half a window on each side, slab roof, eaves about five feet high, three stools, and a little sheet-iron stove. Kept house three months without a chair."

"When Presiding Elder Chivington came to stop over night he had a much better bed than I had a number of times, the year before, in the same place, for I had previously, with a pick and sledge-hammer, broken off, pounded down, or dug up some of the stones, among which I had wriggled myself down so that I could rest a little and sleep. Further, I had covered the ground with sawdust, then with hay, upon which we had put a carpet of gunny-sacks, tacked down with wooden pegs driven into the ground. So, with a few blankets, a pair of nice, white cotton or linen sheets, and a big feather-bed, we made him quite comfortable. But wife had to wait in the morning until he got up before breakfast could be started. A wedding party of four came to stop over night. We bunked on the ground with a part of them, giving the newly-married pair the bedstead with one leg, of my own make.

"When wife and I visited on the circuit, she rode the pony and I took it afoot. I carried my revolver and knife in my belt. On the whole, we had a good year; some souls converted."

And this concerning his work on Central City Circuit in 1861: "I traveled this work on foot, as it was too expensive to keep a pony, with corn at twelve cents per pound and hay at six cents. When potatoes and squashes *came down* to four and five cents per pound we thought we could afford the luxury. Here wife had to foot it as I did, when she went with me. Sometimes she would walk as much as six miles in half a day over the mountains."

John M. Chivington, who has also gone to Colorado

and is again Jacob Adriance's presiding elder, is quoted by Dr. Beardsley as expressing this high approbation:

"Gladly and with willing hearts did he and his noble wife go forward on their mission of love, foregoing a thousand and more comforts that they might have enjoyed. He was a good singer, powerful in prayer, thoroughly Methodistic in all his ways, and strong in faith, giving glory to God. He was pre-eminently 'a man of one work.' The writer of these lines recollects the day this faithful servant of God and the Church came to his 'hired house' at Omaha, in April, 1857, seeking a place to work for the Master. Have known him ever since and can not now remember an act, or indiscretion that could be censured, except this, his leaving Colorado. I have purposely said more about Mr. Adriance than others, because he may fairly be said to be the founder of Methodism in Colorado. Dr. Goode simply came on a reconnoitering expedition, and that accomplished, his work here ended; while Mr. Adriance remained, formed a mission circuit, organized societies, appointed class-leaders, held Quarterly Conferences, and started the first Sunday-school ever organized in Colorado. He is, indeed, the father of Methodism in Colorado."

CHAPTER V.

FIRST PERIOD. (1854-1861.)

CAMP-MEETINGS.

At the close of this period there were only four church buildings reported, and as yet there were few school-houses. We find many of the pastors, like Brother Adriance on the DeSoto Circuit, saying they were not able to hold extra revival services at many places because there were no public buildings suitable for such purposes, and the private dwellings utilized, perforce, for the regular, but occasional, Sabbath or week-night service every two to four weeks, were unavailable for revival meetings. As might be expected under these circumstances, they began early to avail themselves of "God's first Temples," the native groves, and hold old-fashioned Methodist camp-meetings.

The first of these to be held in the territory was very appropriately at John Carroll's grove in the Morris settlement in Cass County, where the first society was organized. It occurred in August, 1856. While Dr. Goode had charge of the camp-meeting, he barely mentions it in his book except to say it was "largely attended and resulted in much good." Hiram Burch, then pastor at Nebraska City, also attended, and writes more fully, saying: "During the summer I attended my first camp-meeting. It was held in John Carroll's grove, three miles southwest of Rock Bluffs. It was in charge of the presiding elder, Dr. W. H. Goode, and was of great inter-

est and power. Eighteen preachers were present some time during the meeting, and there were just eighteen professed conversion."

Both Dr. Goode and Brother Burch speak of attending another camp-meeting, held near Nebraska City, the same summer, "of considerable interest, but not so largely attended."

In the summer of 1857 there were two camp-meetings. Dr. Goode says of these: "The first was in the rear of the Half-breed Reservation, near where Falls City is now located. The rain fell copiously and continuously. The tents had no sufficient covers. I was thoroughly drenched in my bed, having no alternative. I bore it patiently. But there were showers of grace, too. On the Sabbath the sun shone forth; the Word was preached; the power of the Lord attended, and before the close of the meeting a large number, old and young, were brought into the fold of Christ. The second was held as the year previous, near Rock Bluffs. This is one of the most populous and best improved sections of the territory. The attendance was large and the meeting profitable."

Of this second camp-meeting that year, Hiram Burch, then pastor at Plattsmouth, speaks more in detail, saying: "In August of that year (1857) we had a camp-meeting jointly for the two charges (Plattsmouth and Mount Pleasant). The meeting was one of great power, resulting in the conversion of many souls. Among others I remember Charlotte Spurlock, now Mrs. Sherfy, of Nebraska City, who was joyously converted, and her father, Brother Wesley Spurlock, of precious memory, seemed equally happy, and expressed his joy in shouts of praise. During the fore part of the meeting he spoke of

striking tent and going home because of the excessive rain. In the height of his rejoicing over the conversion of his daughter, he was asked, "Do you feel like going home?" and his prompt reply was, "Yes, to my heavenly home."

CONFERENCES.

At the beginning of the work in these two territories, Dr. Goode, when appointed general superintendent of missions in both Territories, was transferred to the Missouri Conference, with the intention of having both Territories attached to that Conference for administrative purposes. By some misunderstanding, however, the Iowa Conference supposed Nebraska, being contiguous to that on the west, would naturally come under its jurisdiction, and as early as October, 1854, laid out a Council Bluffs District, including Omaha and Nebraska City, and Moses F. Shinn was appointed presiding elder. But there is no record showing that Shinn ever exercised the function of this office on the Nebraska soil, the arrangement being superseded by the prior appointment of Dr. Goode as general superintendent.

The appointment, however, is significant of the fact that Iowa Methodism was on the lookout for these opportunities of extending its work, and ready to provide for the religious needs of the settlers in Nebraska, unless otherwise provided for.

In 1855, Dr. Goode attended both Iowa and the Missouri Conferences, and by courtesy the former was allowed to care for the Nebraska portion, and Hiram Burch was received on trial in the Iowa Conference, and appointed to Brownville, Nebraska, but afterwards, as noted elsewhere, was changed to Nebraska City. But the Gen-

eral Conference of 1856 intervening, and passing an enabling act, both these Conferences were relieved of all responsibility in the matter by the organization of the Kansas and Nebraska Conference, which occurred in a tent at Lawrence, Kansas, on the 23d of October, 1856, Bishop Baker presiding. Of Lawrence, where the Conference was held, Dr. Goode has this to say:

"Lawrence still presented the aspect of war. Demolished buildings, fortifications, the United States troops on the one hand, and the Territorial militia on the other, were the surroundings of the scene. The Conference sessions were to be held in a large cloth tent, which had been occupied for the purpose of religious worship. Bishop Baker was to preside, and due time arrived, having been conducted by land across the State of Missouri by a competent escort. The preachers, too, were on hand in proper season, but when, before, did a Methodist Conference assemble bearing arms! I can not say to what extent. But that some were armed I do know."

Of this historic Conference, Dr. Goode says:

"The number of members of Conference was found to be increased by transfers to fifteen. Bishop Baker presided with his usual self-possession. The session was harmonious and pleasant. Brethren felt themselves cemented together by common sufferings and common perils, and rejoiced after the year of unparalleled conflicts to meet again. The religious exercises were attended with divine unction and weeping and rejoicings were mingled together."

Nebraska District was formed and five preachers were sent to this field. The time of meeting was changed to spring, which made the next Conference year a short one of six months. Nebraska City was fixed as the place

for holding the next Conference. There were reported at this Conference (1856) from the Nebraska portion, two hundred and fifty-five members and forty-two probationers.

We can not help but wish we could have more knowledge of these Conferences during this period than can be gleaned from the Minutes. These Minutes are very brief indeed. In the Minutes of 1856 we have the Disciplinary questions and answers with which the Journals of present Conferences are supplemented and a list of committees and their reports, but only a few lines are given to the proceedings of the Conference proper. There is no mention of any roll call, or names of those present. The record of these Conferences in these pages must therefore be brief. Two of these Conferences were held in Nebraska, and at both the presiding bishop was delayed till after the opening of the Conference by reason of floods in the Missouri. At the Conference which met at Nebraska City, April 16, 1857, Bishop Ames did not reach the seat of Conference till Sabbath afternoon, after the Conference business had been transacted and appointments made. Dr. Goode, who presided, conducted the business with such ability that many said he was as good a bishop as any of them. But the flood that prevented Bishop Ames from reaching Conference till it was nearly over, came well-nigh being fatal to the man who acted in his place. In the trip from his home in Glenwood, Iowa, to Nebraska City, he encountered this flood, and his experience in crossing is well worth relating, and may best be told in his own language:*

"Two hacks set out from Glenwood filled with passengers eager to cross. So soon as we reached the bluff

*Outposts of Zion.

and saw the vast expanse of water spread out before us, the old hackman said, 'It is useless to go further.' We urged him on down to the water's brink, but when there, all saw that further progress was impracticable. It was proposed to construct a raft of logs and endeavor to make our way down the current of a bayou which put in near the ferry. Of the ten anxious passengers all declined the hazard save three, two stalwart six-footers and myself. Dismissing our hackman and comrades, we took a wagon through the water to a cabin occupying an elevated spot on the brink of the bayou. Here we purchased two logs and sufficient plank, pinned the logs together at a distance of some four feet, nailed on a deck of plank, and launched our craft; took dinner, placed ourselves and baggage on board, and deliberately committed all to the current. It was a distance of about three miles to our desired landing, and all the way a world of water. The two juniors undertook to manage our float, while I was honored with the post of baggage-master. 'Don't drown the old pioneer,' shouted a voice to the boys as we passed.

"The first half of our voyage was through open prairie. Here we were able to keep our course tolerably well, but on entering the timber we soon encountered logs and heaps of drift-wood. Attempting to pass a huge drift that presented itself broadside in the current, the treacherous craft careened, slid under the mass of logs and disappeared, leaving us afloat and 'no bottom.' The boys sprang upon the drift, I remained in the water till the last article of baggage was handed out, and then they drew me up.

"But now what was to be done? To retreat was impossible, and half the distance was yet before us. So on

we went, bearing our baggage, now wading, swimming, plunging in the cold water, the ice girdling the trees, through fallen timber or long entangled grass; then, for a time, on a dry elevated spot, where the keen wind pierced through our saturated clothing and chilled us even more than when in the water. Thus passed about two hours, sometimes consulting about trying to return, and then again urging onward. By this time I began to find it difficult to speak from a cramp approaching, I suppose, to lockjaw. Mentioning it to one of the young men, I found him affected in the same way. At length, when almost exhausted, we espied through the forest, the buildings at the ferry. My young companions now left me, and urging their way, sent a man to my assistance, who met me just as I emerged for the last time from the water, so enfeebled that in ascending a gentle slope of some ten feet, I fell twice to the ground.

"O, how marvelous is the loving kindness of the Almighty! 'His tender mercies are over all His works.' Often I look back upon the perils of the past and wonder that I still live. Deeply have I felt in my own case the force of the remark of Mr. Wesley, 'A special Providence has been over my life, or I should not have been alive to this day.' We were taken to the cabin, supplied with dry clothing, warm drinks, and a good fire, and kindly cared for in all respects. Our clothing, books, papers, bank-bills, etc., were dried. The night passed comfortably. In the morning I felt refreshed, crossed the river, hired a conveyance, rode down to Nebraska City, and preached that night, my quarterly-meeting being in progress, and never felt any inconvenience. Word went back that I was drowned, but when it was ascertained that I was

actually alive and on the other shore, the statement was changed, and it was currently reported that I had 'waded Missouri River.'"

Of this Conference the Minutes are very meager indeed. The entire list of Disciplinary questions and answers is not given, and only four are entered in the Journal as being acted on. Of these, only the minute in relation to question three has special interest to Nebraska Methodists, recording as it does, the fact that Hiram Burch was admitted into full connection. Two districts are formed, the Nebraska City District, with seven appointments and Dr. Goode as presiding elder, and the Omaha District, with eight appointments and J. M. Chivington presiding elder. Seven of these fifteen appointments receive pastors at Conference, and eight are left to be supplied. Though the Conference year was only six months, and the winter the severest in the history of the State, making the holding of meetings often impossible, it will be seen that the number of districts was doubled, the number of appointments nearly doubled, and the membership, including probationers, increased from two hundred and ninety-seven to three hundred and seventy-two.

The Conference of 1858 is held at Topeka, Kansas, April 15th to 19th, Bishop Janes presiding. The Nebraska contingent, consisting of about fifteen, all on horseback (except Colonel Chivington), with Dr. Goode in the lead, all went together. These had from one hundred to one hundred and seventy-five miles to travel, requiring those who went from the north of the Platte one week each way. Adriance says, it rained or snowed each day on the way down.

That we may know how the preachers went to Conference in those days, I will transcribe the account of this trip which Dr. Goode gives in his book:

"Early in April we were on our way to the session of our Annual Conference at Topeka, Kansas. The distance from my residence was about one hundred and sixty miles. Our company from Nebraska, numbering about fifteen, concentrated on Saturday, the 10th, at Falls City, near the Kansas line, where I was holding a quarterly-meeting. The two days of religious service passed with much interest. The weather was stormy, and the Great Nemaha was swollen beyond crossing. We had intended to take the 'Lane Route' directly through, but were forced into another course. Fearing a confusion of councils, it was proposed, at our Sabbath afternoon meeting to appoint competent conductors, who should make all arrangements, select a route, give directions, and pilot the company through. Two seniors, acquainted with the country, were selected. Orders were immediately given to all to appear early on Monday morning at a designated point, furnished, each, with one day's provisions.

"The morning came, cold, snowy, and forbidding, but all were on hand. My buggy was left behind, and my faithful steed again converted into a saddle-horse, in common with my brethren. Passing down the Nemaha near its mouth, we crossed at Roy's Ferry. Thence angling across the country we, on the second day, entered the Lane Road.

"The appearance of such a company of 'mounted rangers,' in this land of excitements, often led to the question, 'What's up?' To all we were able to return 'an answer of peace.' Rain, high waters, and rough fare

did not depress the spirits nor lessen the appetite. At nightfall we distributed ourselves over sufficient space to find edibles, and in the morning reassembled. The afternoon of the 14th found us on the bank of the Kansas River opposite Topeka. But the river was from bank to bank, the ferry-boat gone, and the bridge was not finished. Putting our horses temporarily in the care of some Indians, by the help of a skiff, and the part-way bridge, we reached the other shore, and delivered our company safely into the hands of the committee of reception."

An item in the details of that memorable trip not mentioned in Dr. Goode's account, is supplied by Hiram Burch, who was one of the party:

"Our hero (Dr. Goode), when in discharge of his duty, disregarded the warning of men and of the elements. In the month of April a band of Nebraska preachers, while on their way to Topeka, Kansas, encountered a swollen stream, and the bridge was gone. Not knowing the depth of the muddy water, there was a momentary pause. But our hero soon solved the problem by dashing into the current on his faithful steed, and the rest of the company followed."

In the transactions of this Conference we are specially interested in the answer to the question, "Who are admitted on trial?" for we find among the fifteen admitted the names of Jacob Adriance, Jerome Spillman, Martin Pritchard, David Hart, Zenus B. Turman, and Philo Corton, all men who were destined to play an important part in the development of Nebraska Methodism. The answer to the fourth question, "Who are the deacons?" has interest from the fact that Hiram Burch and D. H. May are elected and ordained deacons.

The Conference of 1859 was held at Omaha, April 14th to 18th. Again Bishop Scott was delayed until the second day and Dr. Goode is elected to preside. We find several items of business which meant much to Nebraska and Colorado. H. T. Davis is admitted by transfer, Jesse L. Fort by readmission on certificate of location, and J. T. Cannon changed from superannuate to effective relation. In the list of appointments was "Pike's Peak and Cherry Valley, to be supplied." This meant that the grand old man who had organized the Church in the two Territories of Kansas and Nebraska should move on five hundred miles farther west and organize the work in Colorado, and that he would choose as the man who should go with him and be the supply at Cherry Creek, that faithful brother, Jacob Adriance. These two, with a mule team, should make the long trip across the plains to Denver, Dr. Goode remaining long enough to get the work well started, and Adriance remaining long enough to lay good and strong the foundations of Denver Methodism. Of his great work there, we speak in another place.

For the last time Kansas and Nebraska preachers meet together in a single Conference at Leavenworth, Kansas, March 15, 1860. There has been rapid growth along all lines, as shown by the Minutes. Indeed, the Minutes themselves have been growing. The Minutes of 1856 having but nine pages, while those of 1860 have forty pages. The districts have increased from three to eight; the circuits and stations from twenty-one to seventy-six within the two Territories. The members of Conference from fifteen to thirty-eight, and members and probationers from 1,207 to 5,405. The Conference of 1859 having

memoralized the coming General Conference to divide the work into two Conferences on territorial lines, the absence of any action on this subject at this Conference was equivalent to reaffirming it, and it was deemed certain that the General Conference in May following would so divide the Conference, and as a matter of fact such action was taken.

The Rocky Mountain District appears with six appointments, and only two men in all the vast field, and both of these were from Nebraska, J. M. Chivington, presiding elder, and Jacob Adriance at Golden City and Boulder. W. H. Goode and L. B. Dennis are delegates to the General Conference.

It may be of interest to know that this Conference, in session in a city that had been the hot-bed of the pro-slavery sentiment, six months after the John Brown raid at Harper's Ferry, and less than a year before the secession movement began, passed the following resolutions on the subject of slavery:

"*Resolved,* That whereas, God has made of one blood all nations of men, we recognize in every human being the offspring of the same common Father, and admit the universal brotherhood of man.

"*Resolved,* That no enactment made by any number of human beings can give one person the right of possession in another person as an article of property."

CHAPTER VI.

FIRST PERIOD. (Concluded.)

With great difficulty, costing years of effort, we have been able to gather up these few scattered facts relating to this important period of the beginnings of our work in Nebraska; and combine them as best we could into a statement that would convey to the reader a just conception of the work and the workers. I have felt justified in tracing in detail, to some extent, the history of each charge, a method that will be impracticable when we come to deal with later periods, when the charges have multiplied into scores and hundreds in each Conference.

We have also tried to follow each of these first builders working at the task of laying the foundations of our Methodism during this period, a method which can not be pursued later, when the workers begin to multiply in numbers. But it has been assumed that the reader would be especially anxious to know all about these men who laid the foundation, and how they did the work, and the spirit in which they did it.

We have seen that in the short space of two years after Dr. Goode was appointed superintendent of Missions in Kansas and Nebraska, in September, 1854, and there had been appointed at the Missouri Conference in October of that year one lone missionary to Nebraska, the work has sufficiently developed to justify the organization of the Kansas and Nebraska Conference in Oc-

tober, 1856. In less than four years more the General Conference of May, 1860, authorized the division of this Conference into two, along territorial lines, and in 1861 they each set out in their independent careers, the Nebraska Conference being organized by Bishop Morris in April, 1861.

This will constitute the close of the first period and the beginning of the second.

As we have watched the progress of the work in these years we have seen much of the stress of hard work and sacrifice and uncertainty. During the fifties there were very few of the earlier settlers who thought there was much of Nebraska fit for agricultural purposes. They were unable to disabuse themselves of the false impressions made by the maps in the geographies they had studied, which included nearly all of Nebraska in the "Great American Desert." The writer was about that time taking his first lessons in geography and remembers how distinct the impression was and how it made him think Nebraska was something like the great desert of Sahara. Few thought that settlements would ever extend more than thirty or fifty miles west of the Missouri, except perhaps along the southern portion. Then probably the severest winter Nebraska has ever experienced since it was settled was in 1856-57, and this was followed by one almost as severe the next year. In 1856-57 the snow was three to four feet on the level, and some perished and all suffered. It was next to impossible to get to where provisions could be obtained. This, with the one or two unfavorable seasons for crops, and a financial crash that in many cases rendered worthless what little money they had, completely discouraged many of the settlers, and

they either returned East, or were swept along by the current that about that time set in toward Pike's Peak and the Colorado gold mines. There is no doubt that the population of many sections, if not of the entire territory, decreased during 1858 and 1859.

But by 1861 the tide had turned and Nebraska was no longer an experiment. The soil was found to be fertile; the climate favorable for crops and healthy for man. The severe winters of 1857-58 had been followed by one or two exceptionally mild ones. The thousands that rushed to the Colorado mining camps must be fed and clothed. These supplies could be brought up the Missouri River to different points in Nebraska, but they were still five hundred miles or more from the camps and must be hauled over the plains by ox or mule teams. This gave rise to the freighting business, which, in the later fifties and earlier sixties, furnished remunerative employment to many, and built up a flourishing trade in outfitting supplies in Nebraska City, Omaha, and other points on the river, bringing much money into the impoverished country.

Of this period, and the men who did the work, no one is more competent to speak than that grand old hero who had led the hosts during these beginnings, had shared their toils and perils, had asked none to go where he, himself, would not go, nor endure more hardship than he, himself, would cheerfully endure. If Paul fought with wild beasts at Ephesus, so did W. H. Goode fight with the wild beasts of border ruffians in Missouri and Kansas. In doing this he could say as Paul said, "In journeyings often, in perils of waters and in perils of robbers, in perils by my own countrymen, in perils by

the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness." 2 Cor. xi, 22. In closing his book, "Outposts of Zion," Dr. Goode makes this retrospect of the work during this period:

"And, now, a closing word with the reader. Near ten years of itinerant life, embracing a portion of my best days, has been spent in the work of frontier missions, a work unsought, undesired by me, till the providence of God, through the constituted authorities of the Church, indicated a path.

"The fields of labor embraced in my successive appointments, and, to a great extent, actually traveled over and occupied, have covered a large area, including all the region between Texas on the south and the extreme territorial settlement in Nebraska on the north, and reaching from the State lines on the east to the Rocky Mountains on the west.

"The country up Red River has been traversed to a point seven hundred miles from its mouth. The region upon the Arkansas has been explored eight hundred miles up; that upon the Missouri one thousand, while the tributaries, Kansas and Great Platte, have been followed, the one to the junction where its takes its name, and the other to its mountain sources.

"Nearly every military post has been visited, and almost all of the mission stations of every denomination. The lands of every tribe of Indians on the Western frontier, and many of the tribes beyond, have borne the impress of my feet, and more or less intercourse has been had with them all. The white settlements have been explored in their infancy and watched in their progress; and an acquaintance has been formed with all the phases and circumstances of frontier life.

"In the course of these labors, the valley of the Mississippi, from the States east, near or remote, to the Territories west, has been crossed twenty-three times, by different routes and modes of travel, besides the amount of traveling in the Territories themselves. The number of miles traveled over in the time is probably not less than sixty thousand, in about five thousand of which my family have participated in their necessary removals.

"The Gospel, meanwhile, has been proclaimed to devout worshipers in the churches; to delegates in Territorial conventions; to promiscuous crowds in court-rooms and hotels; to soldiers in barracks, and to camps of armed men; to the thoughtless and dissipated in saloons; to emigrants in corrals, and to miners upon the mountain sides; to savages around the council-fires, and to slaves upon the cotton plantations of the South.

"Great and unanticipated changes have taken place within this period. New communities have been organized, and lands which, when first I passed over them, would not, I supposed, for half a century, if ever, be the abodes of white men, are now teeming with population. The border has been transferred a thousand miles westward. An empire has sprung up and more than a hundred thousand white inhabitants are found where, less than a score of years ago, I preached to Indians only, save the few whites officially tolerated among them.

"Three entire Conferences west of the State lines have sprung up, and contingent provision is made for a fourth, in the formation of each of which it has been my privilege to bear a part.

"I have witnessed much of the outbreakings of sin, and have seen some violence and bloodshed. Many of

the contacts of life have been rugged. The scene has often been stormy and the skies sometimes deeply overcast.

"I have seen and marked the workings of Christianity in its personal effects upon the great and small, the statesman, the military officer, the common soldier, the white settler and his family, the miner, the Indian, the African slave, and the prisoner awaiting his doom under the law. I have seen its power exhibited in living and dying examples.

"Shall I forbear to add—I have, I humbly trust, realized its supporting power under all life's changes, and often experienced that

> "God is ever present, ever felt,
> In the void waste, as in the city full,
> And where He vital breathes there must be joy."

Nor have its Divine consolations been wanting, when, to human appearance, it has seemed that there might be but but a 'step between me and death.'

"Neither personal feelings nor sense of duty will allow me to close without a brief tribute to the moral and religious worth of the three young men who successively have, by appointment of the bishops, accompanied me upon my different fields of labor—Revs. Henry C. Benson, James S. Griffing, and Jacob Adriance. More fortunate selections could not have been made. In the very intimate relations necessarily sustained by us, our intercourse has been confidential and our co-operation cordial. We have consulted, labored, prayed, wept, and rejoiced together. Cheerfully have they borne their part, and have often lightened by participation, my own burdens. Never have

I witnessed in any of them the slightest deviation from strict moral integrity or entire devotion."

Of Dr. Goode, himself, it should be further said: As early as 1837 his standing among his brethren is indicated by the fact that he was elected principal of New Albany Seminary. "The first literary institution of learning under the care of the Indiana Conference, and Wm. H. Goode was our pioneer educator," says Dr. Holliday, in his "History of Indiana Methodism." Had he continued in the career of an educator, he would doubtless have achieved success and attained distinction along that line. But he soon resigned, regarding the pastorate as the field to which he was called. After finishing his great work in Kansas, Nebraska, and Colorado, he spent many years in the work in Indiana. Dr. Holliday, in summing up his career, says: "Few men have made a more valuable or a more enduring impression upon the interests of the Church than Dr. Goode."

CHAPTER VII.

SECOND PERIOD. (1861-1870.)

The Nebraska Conference came to its birth in a time of momentous events, its own organization being itself an event of great significance. On April 4, 1861, at Nebraska City, Bishop Morris gathered the fourteen Methodist preachers who were members of the Kansas-Nebraska Conference at work in Nebraska, and with these and two others received into full connection during the session, constituted the first Nebraska Conference. At the close of that Conference he found ready to receive marching orders twenty-one men, including those on trial. This band he sent forth against the hosts of sin who were in rebellion against the government of Jehovah. Of these, two were presiding elders, who, among other duties, were to serve as recruiting officers to enlist more workmen as the exigencies of the work demanded.

Eight days after this, on the 12th of April, Beauregard fired the fateful shot that opened the slave-holders' rebellion, and which proved the death-knell of slavery. On the fifteenth of the month Lincoln summoned seventy-five thousand men to the army, and sent them out to subdue this rebellion.

These events are not wholly unrelated, as may seem to the casual reader, nor is the relation one of mere coincidence in time. Both these great leaders are fronted with a rebellion, but with this difference; the one against

SOME WHO CAME IN THE SIXTIES.

1. J. J. Roberts. 2. A. L. Folden. 3. W. S. Blackburn. 4. Joel A. Van Anda. 5. F M. Esterbrook. 6. W. A. Presson. 7. Geo. S. Alexander. 8. Lewis Janney. 9. D. H. May. 10. Thos. Worley.

which Bishop Morris organized his forces and sent out his bands was more fundamental, being against the government of God. This rebellion having depraved the human heart and placed selfishness on the throne instead of love, was the cause of the rebellion which Lincoln set out to subdue. The rebellion of the South was but an incident in the age-long and world-wide rebellion against God.

But we may trace even a still closer relation. There can be no doubt that the defeat of the slave party in their effort to capture Kansas first and then Nebraska, and make them slave States, greatly exasperated the Southern leaders. So it is but the simple truth of history to say that the first battle was fought during the late fifties, when the conflict raged between the hordes of border ruffians, and the hosts of free men from the north, who had rushed to these Territories, many to Kansas as the point in greatest danger just then, but also many like H. T. Clark, Andrew Cook, and others, came to Nebraska, for the express purpose of saving these to freedom. We know the result. Kansas was saved to freedom, and that meant that Nebraska should remain free as God had made it. We are proud to record that Methodism, under the lead of Wm. H. Goode, was one of the prime factors in bringing about the victory won in this first battle. When the Conference met in Lawrence in 1856, many of the preachers, recognizing the situation, went armed, and all continued their work at the peril of their lives. But they staid and fought it out, and triumphed.

It was this exasperating defeat in their scheme concerning Kansas and Nebraska, together with the subsequent election of Abraham Lincoln, that led to the cul-

mination of the "irrepressible conflict" in the fierce Civil War and the final doom of slavery.

While it may be true that those at work in Nebraska were not as much exposed to these perils as if they had been in Kansas, they belonged to the same Conference and were subject to marching orders that would place them there if the work demanded it. Hiram Burch received his first charge in Kansas, and while there crossed the river into Platte County, Missouri, and bearded the lion in his den by preaching the Gospel in a county whose citizens had declared such action on the part of a Northern Methodist should be punished by tar and feathers for the first offense, and death for the second. David Hart, after planting Methodism in Richardson and Pawnee Counties, spent two years in Missouri preaching the Gospel in the face of these threats. Isaac Collins, after serving two pastorates in Nebraska, in 1858 received appointment on the Kansas side of the line, and at first Dr. Goode spent most of his time in Kansas. Thus, so far as their Church relations and duties were concerned, they were integral parts of the same body of men who fought this preliminary battle.

But let us approach with becoming respect still more closely to this historic body of consecrated men. A few names with which we have become familiar during the struggles and toils of the fifties, are missing. The name of W. H. Goode does not appear, and will not appear again. But he has accomplished his mission and having just returned from his arduous work of organizing Colorado Methodism, he is spending a few quiet days in his home at Glenwood, preparing for the press that wonderful story of frontier work in his book "Outposts of Zion."

Isaac Collins, the cultured pioneer, who was among the first who hastened to the front and began to lay the foundation of Omaha Methodism, has cast in his lot with the Kansas Conference, his last two pastorates being Atchison and Baldwin City, the latter the seat of Baker University, already established. He was soon after this transferred to the ranks above, departing this life in 1863.

Jacob Adriance is temporarily absent laying the foundations of Colorado Methodism, but will soon reappear upon the scene. J. M. Chivington is presiding elder of the Denver District, and will be heard from in his celebrated military rôle. D. H. May is in the Kansas Conference, but will soon return and be heard from in Nebraska.

A few others who appeared for a brief time have located and dropped out of the work. But most of those who have wrought in this field during the fifties are on hand to organize the new Conference and are ready to push the battle still further.

Of these, Wm. M. Smith is there but soon passes on west. J. H. Alling remains a little while, then goes back to Garrett Biblical school, takes the course and remains in the Rock River Conference. Theodore Hoagland continues until 1863 and then disappears from the list. Jerome Spillman goes into the army as chaplain, and at the Conference of 1863 is granted a location, at his own request, as is also L. W. Smith. Concerning Jerome Spillman it should further be said that after serving two years as chaplain of Fifth Iowa Cavalry, he went to his old home in Indiana, raised a company, was elected captain of this Company "G," Ninety-third Regiment of Indiana Volunteers, and went to the front and was wounded

at the battle of Jackson. After the war he entered the ministry in the South, and besides other charges, served one term as presiding elder of the Atlanta District. He died November 30, 1899.

But there are a number of strong, faithful men who for many years, and some during their entire life, remain in the ranks. Among these are Martin Pritchard, David Hart, W. A. Amsbary, Z. B. Turman, J. T. Cannon, Isaac Burns, Jesse L. Fort, and H. Burch. It is the privilege of Hiram Burch to still tarry among his brethren and go in and out among the people, highly esteemed and revered by all Nebraska Methodism. Few have done more than this quiet, unassuming man of God, in making the history, and none have been so able and willing to render invaluable assistance to the writer in rescuing from oblivion many of the facts of the history of those early times. He has cheerfully rendered every assistance in his power.

While we miss the great leader, W. H. Goode, his work as leader is bequeathed to three great leaders, one, H. T. Davis, coming to the Conference by transfer from Indiana in 1859, and the other two, T. B. Lemon and John B. Maxfield, being received on trial at this Conference. Dr. Goode's mantle has fallen on worthy shoulders. Indeed, it is manifestly providential that with the retirement of Dr. Goode, and just at the time when Methodism was entering upon its new era of separate work, and during its formative period, much of it through the stress and storm of adverse conditions, that the leadership should have fallen to these three stalwart men and capable and wise leaders, and that they were spared long enough to lead Nebraska Methodism into the full maturity of its organized career.

True, Dr. Lemon was not allowed to give as many years to the work in Nebraska as either of the other two. But he entered the work at a more mature period of life and with a larger experience and thorough training acquired in the old Baltimore Conference, that mother Conference of organized Methodism, and hence in the twenty-five years he was permitted to give to the work in this State, his achievements rank with the best. For sixteen years he gave the eastern portion of the work the benefit of his great powers, contributing mightily to the building up of such centers as Omaha and Nebraska City, besides effective leadership as presiding elder. Then in 1877 began the great work of his life, the development and organization of the work in the western part of the State.

It was the privilege of H. T. Davis to begin his work in Nebraska two or three years earlier than the other two, and continue in the effective ranks two or three years longer than either of them, beginning his work as a supply on the Bellevue Circuit in 1858, and ending it on the Lincoln District in 1901, forty-four years of continuous service.

While the territorial range of H. T. Davis's work was more restricted than either of the other two, being confined to what is now embraced in the Nebraska Conference, with the exception of a few years of pastoral and district work in Omaha, yet within these bounds no name is so well known and no workman has left so deep an impress upon the Church and the cause of Christ in general, as H. T. Davis. His very presence in a home was a benediction. In the presence of this saintly man sin stood rebuked and righteousness strengthened.

But these with others that joined the ranks later on

will be more fully appreciated as the story of their grand achievements is unfolded in the succeeding pages.

Of the other member of this ecclesiastical triumvirate, John B. Maxfield, it may be said that for the range of territory over which his work extended in the course of his career, in the peculiar talents which he brought to the work, in the strength of his great personality and in the results achieved, he stands second to no one in Nebraska. He was by nature richly endowed with a strong mind that could readily grasp the great truths of the Gospel, and possessed a command of language that never failed to give clear, forceful, and often most attractive expression to these truths. This was true in the very beginning of his career. Such men as J. B. Weston, of Beatrice, who heard him when on his first circuit (the Beatrice, 1861), rated his sermons then as far above the average. With a wonderful mental capacity for quickly and clearly grasping the meaning of an author; with a most tenacious memory by which he retained the contents of a book, and being a diligent student, he made rapid progress. With what would be called a good education to begin with, though not a graduate, he soon reached a commanding position among his brethren and a high rank as a preacher of the Gospel, which was at once recognized by all classes who heard him, as the following pages will amply demonstrate. Indeed as a preacher, it may be questioned if he has had a superior in the history of the pulpit in Nebraska, in our own or any other denomination.

We would be glad to peer into the early life of this strong personality and trace the influences which wrought to make him what he was, but we are only in possession of a few simple facts. He was born in Syracuse, New

York, February 24, 1833. He was converted at a meeting held by the Wesleyan Methodists at Waddell Meeting-house, in Knox County, Ohio, in February, 1856, and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church at Waymanville, Indiana, in the following April. He soon felt the call to preach the Gospel, but, as in the case of many others, this was not to be without a struggle extending over several years. He was then twenty-three years old and may already have had other plans of life. The next year, 1857, he fell in with the currents that set in toward Kansas and Nebraska at that time, and soon plunged into the rough life on the frontier, first in Kansas and then in 1858 coming up into Nebraska. But all who knew him say he bravely met some of the severest hardships incident to life in a new country. He came to know what poverty meant. At one time he must part with his gun to pay his board-bill. And he knew what sorrow meant. It was here in the vicinity of Blue Springs, Nebraska, that he lost his first wife, the daughter of Dr. Summers, and soon he, himself, passed through a long siege of sickness, often hovering very near the verge of eternity. Good Mrs. Knight, who is still living, and who nursed him through this spell of sickness, says that the call to the ministry that had come to him in Indiana soon after conversion, came again, and he yielded. But though he had, up to this time, not yielded to the call to the ministry, Mrs. Knight and Mother Shaw and all who knew him, agree in saying that he had all this while maintained his Christian integrity. After his recovery from his illness, and receiving license, he preached occasionally during the winter of 1860-61.

They tell the story that at the first service he con-

J. D. Maxfield

ducted he was so embarrassed that forgetting himself, he turned his back on his congregation when he knelt to pray. We can hardly believe this of the self-poised Maxfield that most of us knew in later years, but as a side light, served to explain in part, at least, his long hesitancy about entering the ministry. His sense of the great responsibility in preaching the Gospel and a feeling of inadequacy to the task made him hesitate, and overwhelmed him with embarrassment at the first attempt, as it has so many other strong men.

He was recommended for admission on trial and received at the Conference of 1861. Perhaps of all the little band of twenty-one whom Bishop Morris sent out from the first Nebraska Conference to their several fields, none went to a harder or more discouraging post than did John B. Maxfield when he went as junior preacher to the Beatrice Circuit, which was on the extreme frontier, there being nothing further west. His senior, Joel Mason, had been on the circuit the year before and had received only $150 of the $300 promised. Now there were two of them to divide the $150, if they received so much, which, as it turned out, they did not, and the amount that J. B. Maxfield received for his first year's preaching, from the people he served, did not exceed thirty dollars, the whole amount for both being sixty dollars. His share of the missionary money would be $112.50, assuming that the junior preacher received half of the allowance of $225. But this strong man, to whom the world was beckoning with much more enticing offers in a worldly way, "chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God," rode forth on his little white pony and began at the bottom that great career as a Methodist minister, asking no favors except

a fair chance to win his way and by the blessing of the great Head of the Church do his work "and make full proof of his ministry." As might be expected of so well equipped and forceful a personality, he soon finds, and easily maintains his place among the leaders for over forty years, as pastor, presiding elder, college president, member of General Missionary Committee, or as delegate to the General Conference, and is listened to with respect and interest.

Of the standing which he won in the General Conference, and with the Church at large, we have an intimation in the following editorial by Dr. Buckley: "The Rev. David Marquette has contributed to this paper a memorial on the career of the late Dr. John B. Maxfield. With Dr. Maxfield we had as intimate acquaintance as was possible to be maintained by men separated by half the continent. In the General Missionary Committee, and in the five General Conferences of which he was a member, we met him frequently. As an extemporaneous orator he was far above the average. In the Committee on Episcopacy, in 1892, in a debate that sprang up unexpectedly, and for which he could have made no preparation, he delivered an address which was, from one end to the other, a rolling current of true eloquence. It was upon the fixing of official residences in Europe, and a part of it was as lofty in thought and diction as any passage from the recorded debates of the great ecclesiastical bodies of England in the days when great men spoke without limitation of time. Dr. Maxfield always had the rhetorical manner, whether he said more or less important sentences or was more or less solemn.

In the course of his life he had two severe attacks of

paralysis, and so great was his general strength that not until the third, which occurred in the summer of 1899 (as Dr. Marquette observes in another paper), was he robbed of that power of speech that had meant so much to himself and his friends and the Church. His efficiency in every sphere was fully equal to his power as a public speaker, pastor, and presiding elder. Until paralysis had destroyed the mobility of one side of his face, he was a magnificent looking man, stalwart, well proportioned, and had his voice exactly adapted to his style of thought and expression."

But while the number of preachers did not increase during the first eight or nine years, these three leaders were soon joined by others who took the place of those who left. Among them were such men as A. G. White, W. B. Slaughter, J. J. Roberts, and J. G. Miller; equal, and perhaps in some respects superior, to some of the pre-eminent three above referred to. These were all strong intellectually, men of culture, who will compare favorably with those of any other denomination. If they did not attain to the same pre-eminence, it was because they were not permitted to give as much time to Nebraska Methodism, or lacked the opportunities.

The Conference was organized by Bishop Morris at Nebraska City, April 4th to 8th, with H. T. Davis as secretary, Martin Pritchard assistant, and Hiram Burch statistical secretary. The bishop conducted the opening services, consisting of the reading of the 10th chapter of Romans, singing the 137th hymn, and prayer.

In the Minutes of this session the Disciplinary questions and answers took the place of the usual Conference Journal, and from the statistical reports we find Nebraska

Methodism started out in its separate career with 948 members and 396 probationers, and twenty local preachers. There were thirty-one Sunday-schools, 214 officers and teachers, and 978 scholars. There were four churches valued at $7,700, and one parsonage valued at $600.

Of the benevolences, only the Missionary and Bible cause received contributions, the former $36.22, and the latter $20. The claims, receipts, and deficits for pastoral support the preceding year, as reported at this Conference, did not present a very inviting prospect for these men, from a financial standpoint. On the Omaha District the total claims were $3,956; receipts, $2,364; deficits, $1,811. On the Nebraska City district the deficits were $426 in excess of receipts; only forty-five per cent of claims having been paid. The average per pastor and presiding elder on the Omaha District was $338, while on the Nebraska City District the average was $160. This does not include Missionary money, which was about $125 for each charge.

This is the outlook for support which confronts these men. Will they go to such fields for such pay? A prominent pastor in a sister denomination, who was in Omaha in those early days, states that his salary was only $600, not half enough, he affirms, to support a family. If $600 was not half enough to support a family, how far short must the $300, the average of our men, including missionary money, have been?

As the war had not yet broken out this Conference did not feel called upon to express itself on the pending struggle, but at the first Conference after the strife began, in 1862, it hastened to put itself on record in these emphatic words: "Resolved, That we hold in the deepest

abhorrence the wicked and treasonable efforts of the rebels of the Southern States, who are laboring to rend to pieces the best Government the world has even known.

"Resolved, That it is the duty of every citizen of these United States to uphold and aid the Government in suppressing the present rebellion.

"Resolved, That we highly approve the policy the Federal Government is pursuing, in the present agitated state of the country, and the vigorous and successful efforts she is making to restore her to her former quiet and prosperity.

"Resolved, That the Government of the United States has our warmest sympathies, cordial support, and most ardent prayers, in this her fearful struggle."

For the first four years, or during the war, the growth was slow. Indeed, in one respect they were at first not able to hold their own. Starting out in 1861 with nineteen pastoral charges, they dropped down to seventeen in 1863, and to eighteen in 1864. These losses are accounted for by the disturbed conditions incident to the war, and the check to immigration resulting therefrom.

CHAPTER VIII.

SECOND PERIOD. (1861-1870.)

All but two of the preachers will go to circuits, Nebraska City and Omaha being the only appointments that have reached the dignity of stations. And this will continue to be the case through nearly all of this first part of this period. But while Nebraska City station leads in number, there are several circuits with a larger membership than Omaha. Nor will those who go to the stations find the work much easier than on the circuits, except perhaps in the matter of travel and exposure. All will find confronting them peculiar difficulties growing out of the war that is soon to break in fury upon the country, and some will meet what seem almost insurmountable obstacles to the successful prosecution of the Lord's work.

It may be said that many will do well if they "hold the fort" during these trying times. There will be no accessions through immigration, for this will cease, almost entirely, with the exception that there will be many Missouri refugees. But neither the Church nor the country will derive any benefit from this class. That State was fought over by both parties, and these refugees were largely sympathizers with the rebellion, without the courage and manliness to fight for their principles. They did little but breed dissension in the local communities and Churches along the river. It had come about in Nebraska as in all the North, that after the leaders of the Southern

rebellion had become traitors, the loyal portion of the people were not quite satisfied with a non-committal attitude, but insisted on outspoken and unmistakable loyalty to the Government and approval of the Government in its effort to suppress rebellion and save the Union. Failure to do so sometimes brought on bitter conflicts in the locality and even in the Church. We have already seen how one otherwise pious and strong preacher, Wm. M. Smith, was shorn of his power to do good by refusing to come out decidedly as a Union man. If the failure to come out decisively for the Union cause made trouble, it fared still worse for any who were indiscreet enough to express disloyal sentiments. S. R. Tricket, who came from Missouri in 1862, well recommended, and was employed by the presiding elder, H. T. Davis, to fill out the unexpired term of Jerome Spillman at Plattsmouth, learned this to his sorrow. He managed to keep his real sentiments concealed for a little while, but, being something of an orator, he was invited to deliver the oration on the Fourth of July, and declined with the remark that "the Fourth of July was played out." The indignant Church officials, being all loyal, locked the door against him, and instead of the Fourth of July being "played out," Mr. Tricket found himself shut out of his pulpit, and was soon run out of the town by an incensed community.

On the other hand there were Southern sympathizers, especially among those refugees who became so numerous in some places as to feel that they could assert themselves, and these resented any statements in the pulpit by any of our preachers, adverse to the "institution" of slavery. P. B. Ruch tells of some of these at Rulo, who

became offended at some remarks made in the pulpit on a quarterly-meeting occasion, by Presiding Elder C. W. Giddings, against slavery, and they indignantly demanded of him why he, as pastor, should allow such a man as Giddings in his pulpit.

These are but a few examples of what took place in nearly every community during the war, and greatly retarded the progress of the Church.

Another cause that affected the growth of the Churches was that, while immigration ceased almost entirely, up to 1865, many who were here went into the service of their country. It is probable that not less than 2,500 went from Nebraska, including those in Curtis's Cavalry, of Iowa. This was about nine per cent of the total population, which was, according to United States census of 1860, 28,000.

Besides the distractions incident to the Civil War, there were frequent Indian troubles on the frontier, and even more frequent Indian "scares." Besides the men sent to the front to fight rebels, militia companies were formed to repel the bloodthirsty Sioux, who were then on the warpath, attacking freighting trains on the plains, and sometimes swooping down on defenseless settlers on the frontier.

William Mudge, still living with his family in Beatrice, and all worthy members of our Church from the first, was an early settler in Gage County, locating a claim on Cicely Creek. He informs me that about this time they lived in daily peril from the Indians, and the Cheyennes did drive away all his stock. They were then on the warpath in the southern portion of the Territory, the range of their operations extending from Cottonwood on

the Platte, to Little Blue and Big Sandy, in Gage County. He soon after, with other settlers, joins the militia that at that time made a campaign against the Indians. Of one incident in this campaign he tells me this story:

At Pawnee Ranch on the Little Blue, on August 13 to 15, 1864, 1,000 Sioux surrounded a little band of one hundred white settlers with but few arms. But they had for their commander that indomitable leader, Rev. A. G. White (afterward a presiding elder), who had led a company from Pawnee County, and under his leadership this little handful of brave, determined frontiersmen put up such a vigorous defense, shooting with such terrible effect, that even these mighty Sioux gave up the contest and retired on the third day.

Andrew Cook, in his reminiscences of these times, tells of the panic-stricken settlers who occasionally rushed in to the older frontiersmen for protection and supplies to take the place of their all, which had been taken or destroyed by those bands of Indians. In the general history of Nebraska, published about 1880, is a letter from General O. P. Hurford, then of Oakdale, giving an account of these Indian troubles north of the Platte.

The following brief extract will tell of these troubles, and explain the immediate causes of these outbreaks of savage cruelty:

"During the rebellion, the animus of the Indians on the plains seemed to change as the fortunes of the Union forces varied, and when it became necessary for the Government to pay them their annuities in greenbacks instead of gold and silver, they became restless and impudent. Frequent depredations were committed by them upon freighters and the graders and tie-cutters of the Union

Pacific Railroad. This state of things was a constant source of anxiety to the settlers along the Elkhorn and Platte Rivers. In addition to this, Governor Saunders was frequently in receipt of anonymous letters from Kansas and Missouri, warning him that the rebel Quantrell was planning a raid on Omaha, to sack the town and rob the banks. These letters were brought to my attention by the governor, with instructions to adopt such means as I had at my command to meet the danger, should it arrive. While the public mind was thus agitated, we awoke one morning in July, 1864, to find some of the streets of Omaha full of refugees from the Elkhorn, who brought with them the dire report that the Indians were down upon them in force. Whole settlements packed up what movables they could in a hurry, and rushed into Omaha for protection. The thing looked serious. Word was sent to Bellevue, in Sarpy County, where the good people rallied and hastened to the scene of the reported danger. At Omaha, we rushed to arms; horses enough for two companies of cavalry were pressed into service, mounted by willing volunteers, and sent to the front. I remember well the high character of some of the volunteers. Side by side in the ranks appeared Hons. P. W. Hitchcock and A. S. Paddock, both of whom served afterward with distinction in the Senate of the United States, and Mr. Hitchcock also as delegate in Congress from the Territory of Nebraska."

Here we have a combination of causes, any one of which would supply obstruction to the growth, both of the Church and Territory. But combined as they were, and operating at the same time and on the same area, did actually result not only in hindering the growth of the

Territory, but without doubt diminished the population, and would have prevented any growth and perhaps depleted the membership of the Church, but for the faithfulness and efficiency of pastors and laymen, and the gracious revivals with which they were blessed, whereby there was some growth during every year of this dark period.

Only the pastor who goes to Peru in 1861, will find a parsonage, and only three outside of Omaha and Nebraska City will find churches to preach in, these being at Bellevue, Elkhorn, and Brownville.

They start out with two districts and this will remain the number till 1865. These are manned by H. T. Davis on the Nebraska City District, and Wm. M. Smith on the Omaha District till 1863, when Isaac Burns fills the place for two years.

There are besides the districts only nineteen appointments, and in 1863 and 1864 even this small number will be reduced to seventeen. Let us, as far as possible, follow the several members of this devoted band as they bravely battle with these difficulties during these exciting and eventful years.

If we start in on the southern tier of counties where the settlements have already extended as far as Beatrice on the Big Blue, we will find J. W. Taylor, he who was among the first to report for duty as early as 1855, at Falls City, and the old hero, Isaac Burns, at Table Rock, both in Richardson County. These are busy through the year building on the foundations laid by David Hart in 1855. The following year J. W. Taylor asks and receives a local relation along with Philo Gorton, and Isaac Burns is sent to Mt. Pleasant, and the next year is pro-

moted to the responsible place of presiding elder of the Omaha District, where he remains two years.

In 1862 we find T. M. Munhall and L. W. Smith on the Falls City Circuit. They found one hundred and six members, including six probationers, and report at the next Conference 242, including sixty-four probationers. This was a gain of 136. This increase may be in part accounted for by change of boundaries, but was doubtless mostly the result of revival effort, the increase in probationers being fifty-eight.

On account of ill-health, L. W. Smith asks and receives a location at the next Conference. T. M. Munhall goes the next year, 1863, to St. Stephen Circuit, which appears for the first time at this Conference, and was probably before a part of Falls City Charge, the phenomenal increase of the year before making a division necessary. The next year Brother Munhall is located at his own request, but reappears in 1865. There is nothing in the Minutes to show that he was re-admitted except the fact that he appears on the examining committee and receives appointment at that Conference and at several succeeding Conferences.

The Minutes during all this period up to 1867, are defective in that there is no mention of those coming into the Conference by transfer or by re-admission on certificate of location. The Journal of the proceedings not being printed, it was deemed sufficient to print the usual Disciplinary questions and answers, but these did not include a number of items of this kind.

W. King, a local preacher, becomes pastor of the Falls City Circuit in 1863. The number he reports drops down to 115, including probationers, but this is owing, in part

at least, to division of the circuit. During Brother King's pastorate a small parsonage is built at a cost of three hundred dollars.

R. C. Johnson follows King at Falls City and continues two years, reporting in 1865, eighty members, including twenty probationers.

Hiram Burch goes from Brownville to Table Rock in 1862, but resides in Pawnee City, one of the appointments on the circuit, the other of the three organized points being South Fork.

They can secure nothing better than a log cabin, with one room and a garret in which to live. But he soon had a subscription of $500 in cash and labor, and by doing much of the hard work himself, quarrying stone, making shingles, mixing mortar and doing carpenter work, they, in due time, had a parsonage of four rooms, a cellar and pantry, into which they moved in December and had a comfortable house the balance of the pastorate of two years. This is the way parsonages were built in those days.

Hiram Burch is followed on the Table Rock Circuit in 1864 by A. G. White, but like Brother Burch, he lived in the new parsonage built at so large a cost of personal toil by his predecessor. Here also his labors are rewarded by a small increase. This pastorate was distinguished by the raising of a militia company, which, as previously noted, he commanded in the memorable and victorious contest with the Sioux at Pawnee Ranch on the Little Blue. At the close of his single year on this circuit he reports a slight gain, both in members and probationers.

In 1865 Martin Pritchard becomes pastor of Table Rock Circuit, and is able to report a substantial gain of sixty-nine members and probationers.

To Beatrice Circuit, the one farthest west on the frontier, and the one with as few attractions as any charge in the Conference, John B. Maxfield is sent. He will find no parsonage, no church, and only forty-seven members, and these scattered over a wide range of territory. But nothing daunted, this stalwart young Methodist preacher will be seen on his little white pony, riding up and down the Blue, from Blue Springs on the south to points near where Lincoln now stands, on the north.

After a year of hard work on the Beatrice Circuit. Maxfield goes to DeSoto Circuit, then to Decatur, but the Government calls him to take charge of the Industrial School for the Pawnee Indians, located at Genoa, where he remains three years. Of his brief stay at Decatur, Mrs. Robert Ashley, one of our most intelligent and faithful members at Decatur, has this to say in an interesting sketch of the history of Decatur:

"In 1863, Rev. J. B. Maxfield was sent to be our pastor. He made his home with us. After staying less than three months, he was transferred to Pawnee Reservation, and we were left without a pastor. Brother Maxfield was appreciated in Decatur; he was a powerful preacher. We held services in a small school-house and every one attended. There was a warm feeling for him in the entire community, and his removal caused great consternation."

Rulo, while one of the oldest towns in the State, did not seem at first to present conditions favorable for the planting of a Methodist Church. This was finally accomplished by Rev. P. B. Ruch, in the spring of 1865. He had given a number of years of faithful and efficient work in the old Baltimore Conference, until failing health compelled him to give up the work, and he sought a home

in Nebraska, coming to the Territory in 1864, and locating at Rulo. He found only three Methodists when he came to Rulo, but soon began to preach as opportunity offered. He taught the first public school in that place, which was attended by both white children and those of the half-breed Indians living on the half-breed tract, on which Rulo was located, near the mouth of the Great Nemaha.

The first members of this class which P. B. Ruch was finally able to organize, were D. W. Searles and Jacob Shaff and their wives; Mrs. Scott, the mother of W. D. Scott and of Mrs. Shaff; Mrs. W. D. Scott, Mrs. May, Mrs. Parsons, and Rev. P. B. Ruch and wife. D. W. Searles was the first class-leader. A little later, Rev. C. W. Giddings appointed Brother Ruch preacher in charge.

Brother Ruch says he thinks he was the first Methodist to preach the Gospel in Rulo, at least no one there seemed to have any knowledge of any sermon at an earlier date. This is accounted for by the mixed character of the population up to that time, consisting, as he informs me, of half-breed Indians, Frenchmen, political refugees from Missouri, and some white people, mostly from Ohio. But there were not enough of these last and the other classes were poor material for a Methodist Church. It was not until the latter came in sufficient numbers that a class could be formed.

At the Conference of 1861, H. Burch was returned to the Brownville Circuit the second year. A small church was built at a country appointment and one purchased at Brownville. It seems that T. W. Tipton, afterwards chaplain in the army, and one of the first United States Senators from Nebraska, had been a Methodist preacher

in Ohio, but came to Brownville as a Congregationalist and organized a society and built a church. The society soon run down and the church was sold to our people for $700. A part of this Brother Burch raised in Brownville, but the balance was raised in 1861-62 among some Churches in Illinois, where he was acquainted. This sending pastors back to the East to solicit help was sometimes a necessity in those days, before the great Church Extension Society became the medium by which the benevolent contributions of the East reached the needy Churches of the West, and as we shall see, greatly facilitated church-building.

Brother Burch succeeded, though during his absence one of his children died. The child was sick only two or three days. Of this sad incident, he says:

"It was two weeks before tidings could reach me by letter, and even then I felt I could not return home until money enough was raised to save the Church, and so wired my wife to know if the rest were well, and continued my work."

The circuit had four appointments: Brownville, Nemaha City, London, and Fairview. His pastorate is blessed with two gracious revivals at Brownville, and one at each of the other appointments, besides two successful camp-meetings near by. But he says with some degree of sadness, referring to the times succeeding the organization of the Nebraska Conference: "We were few in numbers, and during the troublous war times our growth was comparatively slow."

In 1863 A. G. White is appointed to Brownville. As this strong, cultured man will be met with in responsible places as one of the most successful leaders in Nebraska,

it will be well to take some note of him before passing. He came to Nebraska in 1862, and was principal of the Oreapolis Seminary until the Conference of 1863, when he was received on trial. He is one of the most aggressive and thorough men, looking after all the details and ready to make any sacrifice for the cause so dear to him. He seems not to have known what fear meant, if we are to judge from the heroic defense which he made with one hundred men under his command, against 1,000 howling Sioux savages, as previously noted. We will meet him again in most trying situations, but always the dauntless A. G. White.

His pastorate in Brownville occurred in the darkest portion of this dark period of the war time, yet he was able to report a substantial increase, both of members and probationers.

In 1864 Brownville is supplied by Isaac Chivington. The next year Brownville becomes a station and is served by David Hart. The fact that it has become a station is proof that the work in Brownville itself has been well looked after by these successive pastors, and that substantial progress has been made.

Tecumseh Circuit starts out with eighteen members and forty-six probationers, and in 1865 reports thirty-nine members and fifty probationers. The Minutes record that W. H. Kendall was pastor in 1861, that it was left to be supplied in 1862, with no information as to who was secured. J. T. Cannon was appointed in 1863 and it was again left to be supplied in 1864 by F. B. Pitzer, who is received on trial in the Conference and returned in 1865. He is able to report large gain in membership. He is a plain, simple-hearted preacher of the Gospel, whom God

honored with gracious revivals, and who often succeeded in building up the Church where others failed. He located at the Conference of 1868. In 1867 Tecumseh received as pastor L. F. Britt, of whom Andrew Cook has this to say:

"L. F. Britt is a Tennesseean by birth, enlisted in the Union army when of age and went through the war without visible injury; he came to Tecumseh in 1867, under Presiding Elder C. W. Giddings. Over a quarter of a century ago this young Methodist Episcopal preacher rode over this country, holding meetings among the sparsely settled neighborhoods, preaching in rude schoolhouses, dugouts, and private dwellings, to a poor but anxious people. He rode a white horse, which, I have thought at times, was proud of his master, and of his calling. He was rather an aristocratic horse, carrying his head high in the air, and with much dignity. There were several causes for this; the horse heard his master's sermons before the congregations did, even, when the sermon was in embryo, he heard it, also the hymns were sung long before they reached the meeting-house. It was Brother Britt's custom to preach three times on Sabbath and many times through the week. His circuit seemed to have neither metes or bounds, and the young man was in constant demand over a large area of country. It is well that he was put up as he was, for what was crushing troubles to many of us, was just food for amusement to him; he not only carried his own troubles, but the troubles of others. It was only a young, vigorous mind and body that could stand the constant drain upon his cheery, happy nature. To how many weak and discouraged ones has he been their talisman, more especially in the early days

of our Church history; he had wept with those who weep and rejoiced with those who rejoice. Dr. Britt has filled some of the best appointments in the State and was never known as a "yearling," or one year man. He filled his appointments and staid his full time. He is now filling his third term as presiding elder. The Doctor's forte is his native ability. God endowed him with a good, practical mind; his perception is good, his executive ability also. He has a good knowledge of men and things, and his long years in the ministry has given him wisdom and experience which is of great value to him as a presiding elder. He owes nothing to books or college. It were better that he did, for these advantages would certainly add much to his general usefulness."

Of the extent, results, and present outcome of his work on that circuit he further says: "New church buildings have been erected at Talmage, Brock, Elk Creek, Mt. Zion, Sterling, Douglas, Burr, Mt. Hope, Cook, Spring Creek, Vesta, Smartville, Maple Grove, Crab Orchard, Lewiston, Tecumseh, Plum Grove, Adams, and Glendale. These churches have all been on the territory included in his early circuit. Here he sowed the seed of the kingdom, and laid the foundations for others to build upon."

He was elected a delegate to the General Conference in 1864. Dr. Britt received his honorary degree of D. D. from York College. After over twenty-five years of service he asked for a certificate of location at the Conference in 1895, and took up his residence in Omaha, where he died.

In 1866 a circuit called Helena appears in the Minutes for the first time. This has special interest to the writer as being his first charge to which he went in fear and

trembling, and a year on which convinced him that he needed a far better preparation than he had, for which reason, at the Conference of 1867, he asked to be discontinued to attend school. I may be pardoned, however, if in passing, in the interest of historical completeness, some note be made of the year's experiences. Two of the five appointments, Syracuse and Palmyra, were in Otoe County, and three, Rockford, Helena, and the Illinois settlement, were in Johnson and Nemeha Counties.

We lived in an old cottonwood shanty that had been a ranch, and besides this house with but one finished room, was an old hay-covered stable, which had been left, with a vast army of rats, and they were very hungry. Happily the house stood near to that royal family, Jacob Sollenberger's. Brother Sollenberger had rented that claim that year, in order that the preacher might have a home. In addition to that and many neighborly and Christian acts of kindness, he paid over eighty dollars on the salary that year, and said he never paid his portion of the salary more easily. Yet he was a poor man and he, with other Nebraska farmers, had the first touch of grasshoppers that year. However, they came so late that they only partially destroyed the corn crops.

The following incident was of serious import. We started one evening about sundown from a friend's, where we had been visiting, to visit a family living in a dug-out about two miles distant. There was six inches of snow, and the country rough, and our sleigh broke down, one runner bending inward and letting the sled tip at an angle of thirty-five degrees. It held together, however, so my wife could ride and hold our wraps on, while I walked and led the horse. By the time we got to the

stream on which the dug-out was located, it was dark, and we missed the crossing. After an hour or two of vain search for a place to cross, I became so tired that I must rest. Unhitching our horse, we tied him to a tree and went down into the bed of the creek out of the wind to rest. After a little breathing spell we went back to get the horse and resume our journey, but he was gone. It was now nine o'clock at night, and already we began to fear we would have to stay out all night, which, with the thermometer at six below zero, was an unpleasant and even perilous prospect. I had little concern for myself, but feared that my wife, whose health was frail, would not be able to take exercise enough to keep from freezing. But committing ourselves to the care of the Heavenly Father, we took our shawl and buffalo robe, and started out to find some house, if we could, or to make a brave struggle for life through the long, bitter cold night, if we must. We failed to find any house, and remained out all night, walking till tired out, and then, wrapping ourselves up as well as we could, would rest till we began to get cold, then up and on again. It was New Year's eve, and the moon was bright enough to see my watch and note the time. By the side of an old oak we watched the old year out and the new year in, and again committing ourselves to the Lord, we determined, if possible, to keep alive till morning. About four in the morning it became very dark, and my wife was so exhausted she felt she must rest, and even sleep. But we both knew this would be fatal and resisted the almost irresistible impulse to give up. Just at that darkest moment we were within a few rods of the dug-out we were looking for, but unconscious of the fact that deliverance was so near. After resting a

while, we nerved ourselves for a final effort, being encouraged thereto by the first faint streaks of the dawn. Seeing a dark object across the creek, we went over and found it to be a haystack with some cattle near by. Finding a path through the snow, we pursued it a little way and soon found ourselves standing in front of the long-sought dug-out. The people were up and had a fire, and promptly answered our rap, and were surprised to receive a New Year's call from their pastor and wife so early in the morning. Explanations followed, a warm breakfast was served, and we were, we trust, duly thankful to God that we had come through that bitter cold night without freezing any part of our person. This personal reference may be pardoned as furnishing an illustration of the perils to which the itinerant was exposed.

Saltillo drops out of the list in 1861, and does not appear again till 1864, and is then left to be supplied, but as there is no report of salary, there was probably no one secured. In 1865, H. H. Skaggs, who had the year before been received on trial, is appointed to this charge. He finds ten members and reports nineteen, with thirty-six probationers, which indicates some gracious revivals. Though small, this charge has special interest as being partly on the ground now occupied by Lincoln.

Philo Gorton is placed in charge of the still strong circuit of Rock Bluffs, as it is called this year. He finds 138 members and thirty probationers, and leaves 107 members and sixty-five probationers, which seems to indicate that while the members decrease by removals, the probationers have increased by revivals, leaving the strength of the charge unimpaired. Philo Gorton asks for a location at the end of this year and disappears from our ranks.

He has given four years to the work in Nebraska, was the first to preach and organize societies in a number of places, and did faithful service.

Plattsmouth and Oreapolis Circuit is favored with the appointment of Jerome Spillman in 1861, and doubtless had he remained he would have stirred things there by the blessing of the Lord, as he had done elsewhere during his successful ministry. But early in the year he accepted what seemed to be the call of duty in another direction, and entered the service of his country as chaplain of the Curtis Iowa Cavalry, as mentioned elsewhere. In 1862 this charge is left to be supplied, and H. R. Tricket is employed by the presiding elder, with the result of a speedy rupture on account of the expression of disloyal sentiments, as recorded on another page. The remainder of the year is filled out by J. G. Miller, who had come to Nebraska from the old Genesee Conference, New York. He had become interested in the Oreapolis Seminary, and put in his first few years in Nebraska in a vain effort to save that institution, being appointed agent in 1862, and in 1863 both principal and agent.

J. G. Miller was one of our most forceful personalities, a good preacher, with good executive ability, and was a shrewd business manager. He might have been one of our most useful men, had he not got involved in various business enterprises and landed investments which required so much of his attention that as a rule his ministerial function became merely a co-ordinate branch of his life's activity, and after a few years as pastor at Plattsmouth and Oreapolis, and as presiding elder of Nebraska City District, to which he was appointed in 1865, he took a supernumerary relation in 1868. He always took great

interest in the local Church where he lived, was a liberal supporter, and remained to the last an influential member of the Conference. His brethren honored him with an election to the General Conference in 1864. Perhaps his greatest usefulness was in his aggressive advocacy of temperance and his relentless warfare on the "rummies," as he called the saloon-keepers and their supporters. He was several times the temperance candidate for governor, and other offices, and the vigor of his campaign speeches drew large audiences. He spent the later years of his life in California, where he passed to his reward.

In 1864 David Hart comes to Plattsmouth. The membership has dropped from 102, including probationers, in 1861, to forty, but David Hart's labors are blessed to such an extent that he is able to report seventy-eight members and twenty-three probationers.

The next year, 1865, Plattsmouth received as its pastor, W. A. Amsbary, and under his energetic ministry is destined to make a large advance. Here, as elsewhere, his ministry was to be attended by great revivals, both at Plattsmouth and the country appointment, Eight Mile Grove, and the membership increased the first year to one hundred and forty-four, with seventy-four probationers.

Peru Circuit had already become one of the strongest circuits when, in 1861, Jesse L. Fort was appointed pastor. He remains two years, and the charge about holds its own. He is followed by R. C. Johnson, who remains one year and reports a substantial increase in membership. He is followed in 1864 by that old veteran, Hiram Burch, who is able, at the next Conference, to report still further gains in membership. He is returned the second year, and inaugurates a movement looking toward the es-

tablishment of a Methodist College at that point. The details of this movement are treated under another head, and it need only be said that owing to the arduous work involved in the enterprise during his third year (the time limit having been extended), his health became so impaired that he was compelled to ask to be relieved of his pastoral duties, and at the Conference of 1867 he was under the necessity of asking and receiving a superannuated relation. After this he was able occasionally to resume the effective relation and serve the Church in Nebraska. Of the above named pastors, Jesse L. Fort tarried with us until 1902.

The following account of his life, written soon after his death, will perhaps do partial justice to the worth of this saint and faithful ambassador of Christ:

"Jesse Lofton Fort, the youngest son of Frederick and Lucy Fort, was born in Warren County, Kentucky, May 1, 1816. He was converted at the age of fourteen years, and his parents being Baptists, he united with that Church. At the age of seventeen, while learning the tanner's trade, he made his home with a stanch Methodist, and becoming better acquainted with the doctrines and spirit of the Methodist Episcopal Church, he transferred his membership to this Church. About 1836 he emigrated to Illinois, and settled near Monmouth. Here he was made a class-leader. In 1837 he was licensed to exhort. In 1847 he was licensed as a local preacher. This license was renewed for four successive years by the famous Peter Cartwright, who, with Richard Haney and others of like spirit, gave Jesse L. Fort his first lessons in the Gospel ministry. In 1851 he was received into the Missouri Conference. Missouri and Kansas were at this

time the storm center of that fierce conflict between freedom and slavery, which was to determine whether Kansas was to be a free or slave State, and which culminated a few years later in the great Civil War in which slavery was overthrown. In the midst of this storm of hate and bitter persecution, Jesse L. Fort stood firm, though at times he and his brother preachers did so at the peril of their lives. In 1859 he came to Nebraska and was sent to Falls City. Being unable to obtain a house for his family, he went to Nebraska City, and supplied that charge part of the year. In 1860 he was sent to Plattsmouth. It was his privilege to be one of that historic group that constituted the first Nebraska Conference which was organized at Nebraska City, April 4, 1861, by Bishop Morris. At this Conference he was sent to Peru, where he remained the full legal term. In 1863 his health failed and he was compelled to take a superannuated relation. In 1864-66 he served the American Bible Society, being superintendent for Nebraska and Colorado. In 1867 he was honored with the chaplaincy of the Nebraska Senate. In 1869 he again served as agent of the American Bible Society, this time in Pottawattamie County, Iowa. In 1871 he was made effective and stationed at Palmyra, and 1872, on the Upper Nemaha. In 1873 he was made a supernumerary on account of failing health and went to Missouri, where he served different charges as a supply until 1885. On his return to Nebraska, he took a superannuated relation, which he retained up to the time of his death. He was thrice married. On August 20, 1840, to Miss Martha McChesney; on May 19, 1859, to Miss Mary A. Gates; and to Miss Mary H. Freeman, May 15, 1872, who has walked by his side for thirty

years, caring for him through his long illness, and who survives him. Though, as this brief and imperfect sketch discloses, he has been for most of his life handicapped by poor health, he has been permitted to give nearly three-quarters of a century to the Christian life, and over half a century to the Christian ministry. Brother Fort's last illness was long, and at times very painful, but patiently borne. He passed to his eternal reward at three o'clock, Thursday morning, May 22, 1902, aged eighty-six years and twenty-two days."

CHAPTER IX.

SECOND PERIOD. (1861-1870.)

THE period covered by this history coincides with the beginning of that modern movement marked by the tendency of people toward the great centers, building up these relatively much more rapidly than the rural districts. Historic proportion will require us to give special attention to the development of the Church in these centers, by reason of the relative measure of influence these must exert on the general situation and their consequent greater relative importance. Yet, while Methodism, as is her wont, will adjust her administration so as to meet the new conditions and give special attention to these centers, she will not do so at the expense of the smaller villages and rural districts; a feature of the evangelistic work to which she has always given due care and which the peculiarities of her system, and the spirit of her ministry, have fitted her to do, and in which she has been pre-eminently successful. The justice of this claim will be amply shown in the pages of this history.

It may be said in a general way that no department of our Church work in these first periods was more carefully looked after and utilized than the Sunday-school. We have seen John Hamlin at the head of one in Nebraska City, and good Sister McCoy effecting an organization of a Sunday-school among the first things in Omaha. We have seen that one of the first things Jacob Adriance thought of was to organize Sunday-schools,

supplying libraries. In many places the first movement of a public religious character was to organize a Sunday-school. This sometimes took the form of a Union Sunday-school before there were enough of any one denomination to carry it on. Though these Union schools sometimes persisted in holding the ground long after the Methodists became strong enough to have one of their own and made us some trouble when the effort to do so was finally made, our preachers rightly held that, the Sunday-school being an integral part of the Church, as soon as possible it was better for each Church to have one of its own, and would proceed to organize a Methodist Sunday-school.

It should be explained in passing, that I have felt justified in assuming that the Sunday-school department has been well cared for, and to economize space I have omitted the Sunday-school statistics, except in a few exceptional cases. The reason for this is that I have found that as a rule, the number of officers, teachers, and scholars usually about equal the number of Church members. Thus the total membership in the Church, as given by the last Year-book, was 3,029,500, and the officers, teachers, and scholars in the Sunday-schools were 3,123,297. This rule holds in Nebraska, with occasional exceptions both ways, some of which will be noted as we pass.

The two centers that still claim our attention and which it will be our duty to trace through this second period, are Nebraska City and Omaha.

Nebraska City received as its pastor in 1861, T. B. Lemon. It is very strange, but there is no report from this important charge in 1861. L. D. Price had been appointed in 1860, but had evidently not gone to his charge,

and though one of the most important charges, it seems at the close of the Conference year not to have had a pastor and no report is made. But the year before the membership had been reported ninety, including probationers. Assuming that the number in 1861 was the same, this is the number that greeted T. B. Lemon when he entered upon this important pastorate. He found the membership discouraged. The Church was in debt and was about to be sold. One of the members told him he did not see how he could live there with four children. But the Lord most wonderfully blessed his labors with a great revival, and he came to Conference in 1862 rejoicing over a great increase in membership, being able to report 235, a net increase of 137. The Church debt was also paid.

Dr. Lemon, during this first year, had won the affections of the Church and of the community, and was very popular with all classes and was returned for the second year.

At the end of this year he reported 225 full members and sixty-four probationers, another gain of over fifty, showing the permanency of the work the year before, and the success of the second year.

The legal limit still being two years, Dr. Lemon, though he had won the hearts of all, must needs go to another field, and is sent to Omaha, while Wm. M. Smith is stationed at Nebraska City. He remains two years, and at the end of this term reports 191 members and two probationers. This is a loss of about sixty, as compared with Dr. Lemon's last report, though it still leaves Nebraska City by far the strongest charge in the Conference.

This strong man seems to have been unable to either hold what he found, or build up the Church anywhere,

owing to his want of tact in the expression of his political views. However, this loss may be accounted for in part by the reaction that often follows times of great revival, such as attended Dr. Lemon's pastorate, or by the general adverse conditions that prevailed during the Civil War. As noted elsewhere, the entire Conference did little more than hold its own during the first three or four years of this period.

At the Conference of 1861, Bishop Morris appointed H. T. Davis, who, we have seen, had just closed a very successful pastorate at Omaha, presiding elder of the Nebraska City District. Though thrust into this high office at the early age of twenty-seven, his administration of the district was very acceptable and we may be sure that the residence of himself and wife contributed in no small measure to the success of the work in Nebraska City.

At the Conference of 1865, his time being out on the district, he is appointed pastor at Nebraska City, again following Wm. M. Smith, as he had done in Omaha in 1859. The time limit having been extended to three years, H. T. Davis, as was always the case with him, staid the full time.

The first time the writer ever heard Dr. Davis preach was during this pastorate. I was on my way to my first charge, Helena, in 1866. Two appointments on this circuit lay directly west, the nearest, Syracuse, near where we lived, being sixteen miles from Nebraska City. I reached Nebraska City late in the day and remained over night. Brother Davis was engaged in revival meetings that had been continuing for several weeks. I expected to hear a powerful revival sermon, but heard only a short

talk of not to exceed twenty minutes, when the invitation for penitents was given. Will any one respond to so tame an affair as that? I said to myself. But to my astonishment quite a number responded. Of course many were already under conviction and had been at the altar before. But the incident convinced me that much of the power of H. T. Davis's preaching was the result of the man back of the sermon.

Brother Davis's pastorate at Nebraska City was a success throughout and at its close he was set to the task of laying, at the new capital at Lincoln, the foundations of another great center, which was in after years to become the strongest in the State.

Nebraska City, in 1868, is left to be supplied, and George S. Alexander appears for the first time in Nebraska Methodism, being transferred from the Providence Conference, and filling out the year, is returned in 1869 and again in 1870 to the pastorate at Nebraska City.

With the exception of five years spent in Illinois, during which he filled important places, he was connected with the work in Nebraska twenty-six years, when death closed his career in 1894. His brethren place on record the following as a tender memorial of his life and work:

"George Sherman Alexander was born in Cumberland County, Rhode Island, July 10, 1832. He was kept in school until he was fourteen years of age. During this time he laid the foundation of his future life work. Leaving school he worked in a cotton mill, then in a woollen mill, where he became a weaver. While working in the mill he was also broadening his education by careful study. At the age of twenty-one he abandoned his loom and followed teaching for a short period. In

1854, under deep conviction that he was called to preach the blessed Gospel, he entered the Methodist ministry, preaching his first sermon April 30, 1854. For several years he served prominent charges in Massachusetts and Connecticut. March 11, 1856, he was united in marriage to Miss Abby G. Smith, at Eastham, Mass. In October, 1867, he moved to Iowa, and from thence, in April, 1868, he was transferred to the Nebraska Conference and served Nebraska City, Peru, and Lincoln. He was then appointed chaplain of the State penitentiary. During this time his wife was called to the Father's house above, leaving six children. These were separated until September 20, 1877, when he was married to Miss Susan M. Godding at Philo, Illinois. For the next five years he served Homer and Monticello as pastor, and then, from failing health, returned to Syracuse, Nebraska, taking charge of the Syracuse *Journal* and preaching for the Church in this place for one year. He could not cease preaching, and while editing his paper he became pastor of the Church at Turlington, which he served until a few months before his death. He patiently waited for the summons to call him from the Church Militant to the Church Triumphant, until May 2, 1894, when he was called from pain and suffering to his glorious and eternal rest."

The coming of George S. Alexander brought into our Western work an infusion of New England blood. In the best sense of the word he may be said to have been a live Yankee translated into the vim and push of the great West. He seemed at home from the first. His physique was slight, his weight rarely exceeding one hundred pounds, and sometimes it was not as much. The story is told that meeting a friend in a grocery store his friend

proposed to weigh him over against a sack of flour, and if the sack weighed more than his pastor his pastor was to have it. His pastor got it.

But though his body was always slight and for many years he was the victim of a cancer, that body was the dwelling place of a restless, determined spirit, always taxing the body with plans and schemes of life beyond its frail powers.

It will be seen that Nebraska City during this entire period has had a succession of able men for pastors, and closes the period with 237 members and sixty-three probationers, about the same as reported at the close of Dr. Lemon's two years of phenomenal success. There have been some fluctuations, but it is greatly to her credit and to the credit of these able, faithful men, that through this most difficult period there has been no permanent loss, and she retains her place as numerically and perhaps otherwise the strongest charge in the Conference.

If we now turn to Omaha we find that it starts out in this period with only fifty members and thirty-one probationers. It is left to be supplied and at the end of three months David Hart, who has been sent to Calhoun, is transferred to Omaha. He remains the second year and reports fifty-five members and sixteen probationers, which indicates that he had some revival, yet he is not able to increase the membership. There were at that time many removals and the city itself was losing population. Certainly the situation was discouraging in the extreme. These were the times that try men's souls, and to zealous, ambitious preachers like David Hart, supply the severest test of loyalty. It is much easier to work in a place where everything is prospering and things move forward, than

in a place that is at a standstill, with people discouraged and distracted and facing an uncertain future. Brother Hart is to be honored for holding the forces well in hand and preventing a complete collapse, so that when the tide turned, as it soon did, he could turn over to his successor a well organized Church, with such members as J. W. Tousley, Col. Richie, Samuel Burns, Brother Isaacs, and Mrs. McCoy and others of like zeal and capacity. And Omaha Methodism had the right man in the person of T. B. Lemon to make the most of the opportunity when the tide turned. Fresh from his wonderful success in Nebraska City, Dr. Lemon entered upon his work after the Conference of 1863, flushed with victory and ready to lead the Church forward to larger things.

T. B. Lemon became popular with all classes, not by seeking it for its own sake, but by the inherent qualities of his mind and spirit. There were the strength of intellect, and the culture and refinement of the well-bred gentleman, which seemed perfectly natural to him and strongly attracted the most influential men, like A. J. Poppleton, G. L. Miller, Samuel Burns, and others of like standing. So he was in demand for special services on great occasions. When in December, 1863, Omaha celebrated the fixing of that point as the terminus of the Pacific Railroad, and the ceremony of breaking ground for this great enterprise which was to be of national and even international importance occurred, it was T. B. Lemon who was called on to open the exercises with prayer. When the legislature met it was T. B. Lemon who should be chaplain of one of the houses. In speaking of Dr. Lemon's pastorate at that time, Haynes says:*

"The national conflict was rife, but Mr. Lemon re-

*History of Omaha Methodism.

fused to commit himself to either side, and with eager desire for success in his charge preached, prayed, and sang as if undisturbed by the rigor of fratricidal strife. Mr. Lemon was occasionally criticised for his not unreservedly avowing Union sentiments. A story is told that during a session of the legislature at Omaha, after he was elected chaplain, in a prayer one morning he uttered a petition in behalf of the Chief Executive of the nation. Some members of the Assembly found fault by saying he did not pray for the country. A lawyer of prominence and a friend of the chaplain, told some of them that they were too illiterate to comprehend the meaning of a gifted man's language."

He made friends outside of the Church who voluntarily assisted in the maintenance of the pastor and his projects. The two years of his sojourn in Omaha were almost uninterruptedly pleasant to him and his family, and to the day of his death he had many admirers in the city. Coming to the metropolis at that time, and pursuing the lines of conduct thought by himself the best, he well-nigh broke down the partition that separated between the ardent friends of the Government and those who preferred the success of the Confederacy.

At his coming he found nearly a hundred communicants,* and received seven hundred dollars for his first year's allowance. An increase in the number of the membership not worth mentioning is noted at the close of the year, but his acceptability is signified by his having received on salary, as reported in the Minutes of the Conference, $1,000, and $500 as a donation.

But while thus popular with the rich and influential,

*This is an error, the number being fifty-seven.

he was equally popular with poorer classes. His warm, sympathetic nature made him a real friend to everybody, and everybody felt that the friendship was genuine. The presence of T. B. Lemon in Omaha, unquestionably gave Omaha Methodism a standing in the community it had not had before.

But amid all this popularity, Dr. Lemon held himself steadily to his high ideals of a Gospel minister. He did not depend on what accessions might drift into the Church as the result of the new prosperity and growth of the city, but preached with power the old-fashioned gospel, and held revival services which were very successful and at the end of two years, when he took the district, the membership had increased to one hundred, including twenty probationers, and the Church was strengthened in every way.

It can not but be regretted that at this critical juncture a man like William M. Smith should have been appointed to follow T. B. Lemon, in April, 1865. Flushed with the victories being won by Grant, and a few days later maddened by indignation at the assassination of the beloved Lincoln, the people were more intolerant of any want of sympathy with the Union cause than ever, yet this man stubbornly and offensively held on his way, as will be seen by the following related by Haynes:

"He reaches the city in time to preach on the Sabbath following the assassination of President Lincoln. The church was draped, and loyal men and women were in mourning as if one of their own household had been taken away. They were in expectation that a memorial service would be held. Mr. Smith entered the pulpit at the appointed hour, and to many present was not a stranger.

He chose as a text, 1 Cor. xi, 2: 'For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified,' and proceeded to preach. In the discourse he made no allusion either to the preparation of the room for the occasion nor to the taking off of the now dead chieftain, totally ignoring the sad and disappointed people who had met to honor his name and to do a most willing part in perpetuating a remembrance of his noble manhood and distinguished patriotism.

Mr. Smith was not willing to concede that he had made a mistake in paying no respect to the feelings or preferences of a large share of the people present; but the loyal and patriotic at once decided not to sustain a man, though appointed as a pastor, who would so brazenly offer an affront! A few weeks later the Quarterly Conference met, and after proceeding with the business till the question was reached, 'What has been raised for the support of the ministry this quarter?' Answer: 'Nothing!' The presiding elder, who was present and in the chair, was informed that if he would remove the offending pastor, he would receive pay for the time he had served; otherwise he would get no salary. He was removed, and for a time the charge was left pastorless. Mr. Smith's name appears not again in the Minutes as pastor, but as having superannuated. He removed to Colorado, and it is intimated became connected with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; and now owns and lives upon a ranch a few miles south of Pueblo, in that State."

There appears now the right man for the place in the person of W. B. Slaughter, who fills out Wm. Smith's year, and completes the full term of the pastorate in

Omaha. He finds ninety-three members and seventy-five probationers, the latter being the fruit of T. B. Lemon's revivals. He finds Omaha entering upon an era of prosperity, with Methodism well at the front among the Churches of the city, thanks largely to the influence of T. B. Lemon. Haynes says: "The Methodist Church was now the place of entertainment on the Sabbath, and as a consequence the congregation was much the largest in the city." (Of course by "entertainment" he means that the preaching was the most attractive.)

W. B. Slaughter was one of the most scholarly men we have had in Nebraska. He was born in Penn Yan, New York, July 15, 1823, and received his education in part at the Genesee Wesleyan Seminary. For a while he engaged in teaching, being principal of an academy at Coudersport, Pennsylvania, and later of the Genesee Model School, in Lima, New York. He then joined the Genesee Conference, serving several pastorates, among them Old Niagara Street Church, Buffalo.

Coming West he served Wabash Avenue, Chicago, for the full term, then Joliet. Of this cultured, consecrated man, Haynes gives some facts which show the spirit of the man, and of his devoted wife as well:

"Early during the late rebellion he raised a company of volunteers for the Thirty-ninth Illinois Infantry, expecting to be appointed chaplain of the regiment. But the men whom he recruited insisted upon his being their captain, to whose preference he yielded. However, he actually served as chaplain, organizing class and prayer meetings, and seeking the conversions of soldiers. Serving twenty-one months, toiling with heroic zeal, he was disabled and returned to his family. Recovering as nearly

W. B. Slaughter.

as to permit him to perform pastoral work, he was appointed to Rockford, Illinois. In the midst of his labors at Rockford, in the spring of 1864, Bishop Ames sought him as the man he wanted for Denver District, Colorado. The matter was urged, and he finally consented. The people whom he served remonstrated, and telegraphed the bishop asking that he might not be removed. But the reply was 'He must go.'" He left at once and hurriedly, only delaying long enough to provide a private conveyance that his family might follow. He reached the seat of the Colorado Conference just in time to hear the appointments read at the close of the session, and was startled to hear his own name announced for Colorado District, instead of Denver.

The last-named district, at that date, included all of the southern part of the territory and was made up of a few preaching places a great distance apart, the largest of which was Colorado City, once the capital, having less than ten members. The sacrifice he must make was unexpected, but there was no loyal way out of it. Heroically he accepted the work and sent for his wife and two sons, leaving his daughter that she might attend school. There was no railway reaching further west than Marshalltown, Iowa. Mrs. Slaughter sent her eldest, a boy of seventeen, with the conveyance for crossing the plains in advance, and, taking the rail, overtook him at the western terminus. They together hence began the long and hazardous journey, expecting to meet bands of Indians after crossing the Missouri River.

Arriving at Omaha they were kindly received by Rev. T. B. Lemon, pastor, and his family, who persuaded them to rest a few days. Mrs. S. says: "I started from

Omaha with my two boys, the older serving as driver, and the other two years old, feeling there was safety only in the protection of the divine arm." Often their vehicle was surrounded by the red men, who, at that time, were committing frequent depredations, but they were not molested. Four weeks of wearisome travel had passed, and an axle of their carriage broke when several miles from any habitation, and they were helplessly alone. Fortunately a covered wagon came in sight. They were taken on board and their conveyance was drawn behind; and in this manner were driven into Denver, where they were met by Mr. Slaughter. Tarrying long enough to get the carriage repaired, the trip toward Pike's Peak was resumed, Colorado City being their destination. Their arrival was in the evening, only to find that there was but one place where they could get lodging for the night; and but one frame house in the village; the others were of logs. They could make no arrangement for housekeeping, and could find no place where they could all occupy the same house—they had to be separated for sleeping. As their money was nearly gone, Mrs. S. began teaching, while her husband made a round on the district, taking about a month.

Mr. Slaughter attempted to make better provision for his family's comfort. In his travels he found some mineral springs (now Manitou), and as he had never used his right to government land, he concluded to claim them as a homestead. Upon this claim he and his son put up a log house, and while yet unfinished the family occupied it. Retiring the first night while the stars could be seen through the undaubed apertures and the air balmy and quiet, an unlooked for change in the temperature occurred

before morning. The wind blew cold and biting and snow began flying; and daylight found Mr. S. with a severe cold that soon developed in pneumonia. He summoned a doctor who invited him to his cabin, one room of which he occupied for two months. By the watchful care of the physician he was brought through the crisis. But the doctor advised that he would convalesce more surely in the altitude of Denver.

Mrs. S. says: "Our finances were meager, and living very costly. When we broke our last dollar it indeed looked very dark ahead. But I felt surely the Lord will provide. And he did; for the next mail brought a check for fifty dollars from Governor Evans, who had heard of Mr. Slaughter's illness. This enabled us to outfit for Denver."

Though relating to other fields, these extracts are justified because they reveal so vividly the spirit of self-sacrifice that characterized this cultured man and wife through their entire career in Nebraska. While, as we see, his abilities were soon recognized and he was soon summoned to responsible places in educational and pastoral lines, both in the East and West, he also heard the call of duty when summoned to that hard far-away field in Colorado. There are few men who have made as great sacrifices in the ordinary way as W. B. Slaughter. But there was a special feature in his case which made the trial doubly hard. He was well qualified and strongly inclined to serve the cause of Christ along literary lines, as shown by his book referred to by Haynes, "Modern Genesis," pronounced by competent judges one of the strongest arguments against the "Nebular Hypothesis" ever written. To go West meant to give up the cherished

and congenial plans of his life work, as it then seemed, and doubtless did rob the Church of much excellent work on that line. After coming to Nebraska, though as a rule serving the best charges, it was not always so. He cheerfully took some hard circuits. The writer well remembers that in 1871, when Dr. Slaughter was in charge of Bellevue Circuit, actually receiving not to exceed $700, I visited him at his home in West Omaha. Dr. Slaughter took me with him in his old buggy, down through the woods near where Hanscom Park Church now stands, to visit his son Bradner, who was superintendent of a soap factory, and laughingly mentioned the fact that while he was getting the promise of $700 for preaching the Gospel, his boy was getting $1,300 for making soap.

This visit was an illustration of one side of Dr. Slaughter's character, which was prominent. He had become a father to all the boy preachers, and they often found their way to his home for counsel in their work, but especially in their studies. No one could make a young preacher feel more at ease in his presence. He treated them as though they were his equals, and inspired in them self-respect, self-confidence, and made them feel that if they tried they could make something of themselves.

Eternity alone will reveal how many young preachers Dr. Slaughter has helped at some crisis, and put at their best, and his service along this line is unique, and its value to the work in subsequent years may never be computed, but will be none the less real.

It can hardly be said that Slaughter was an orator, or a revivalist, but he was pre-eminently a teacher of the Gospel. He was a diligent student to the last, and constantly digging about the foundation to find the reason

of things, and would, in skillful ways, indoctrinate the people in the foundation truths of Christianity. It was his chief function to build up into intelligent, strong Christian character the raw material furnished by the revivalist.

This was the strong, cultured pastor that Omaha Methodism needed and received at the crisis in 1865, when the flock had been left without a shepherd by the violent rupture with Wm. M. Smith.

Though the membership is only one hundred, including twenty probationers, they are in high spirits and face a much more hopeful future than had as yet presented itself. The need of a new church was keenly felt, but the way to realize it did not present itself during Dr. Slaughter's pastorate of three years, though he and his brethren among the laity sought it diligently. But along all other lines the Church grew and prospered, and at the end of three years, when Dr. Slaughter gave way to his successor, he handed over a well-organized, enthusiastic Church. As to the exact number of members we have no means of knowing, as the Minutes that year unaccountably omit the statistics relating to membership, something that had not happened before, nor has it since. But the number must have been much larger than at the beginning of his pastorate. The Church had been growing and was beginning to feel its own importance. This is incidentally shown in the fact that they now felt they must have a "special transfer" from the East, and Dr. H. C. Westwood was secured from Baltimore Conference. He was distinguished as being the only Methodist preacher who up to that time had received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from Presbyterian Princeton College.

Of the man, his work, and the results of his pastorate,

Haynes has this to say: "Henry C. Westwood, transferred from the Baltimore Conference, was next in the succession of pastors. He arrived in May, 1867, more than a month after the closing of Mr. Slaughter's term. The agitation the year before of the project of more inviting quarters as a place of worship resulted in the quitting of the old church and making extensive alterations in the structure that it might be rented as a source of revenue. The congregation had already hired and had begun using the German Methodist Church as a place of meeting. Mr. Westwood's cultivated notions of propriety were almost shocked at the coarse looking apartments of this cheap building; and as a concession to his wishes the trustees hired the privilege of using the Academy of Music as a preaching place only once a week—on the Sabbath.

Mr. Westwood reports having large congregations, and that the official board and himself were in complete harmony. The estimating committee suggested $2,000 as his salary, and the Quarterly Conference confirmed their judgment. A new and comfortable parsonage housed him and his family, and the prospect was flattering. The thoughts of the official members were much engrossed in devising a method by which money might be secured to provide a new chapel. Mr. Westwood interested himself in giving assistance, to the partial neglect of more directly religious work. The congregation was not held to the maximum; no revival occurred, though the preacher failed not to be in the pulpit on Sunday. But before the winter was ended, and while the new chapel's walls were being raised, there were intimations of discontent.

The pastor did not enjoy Western etiquette nor the bland manner of some of his parishioners. Much of his former life had been spent among better polished people, and he hardly would tolerate those who could not appear well at their homes or in society; and he almost refused to visit the humble poor of his charge. Nothing better might be expected than that fault-finders would use such an opportunity to complain of the pastor. There seemed to be but little room left for mutual good feeling between the servant and the served, and before the ending of the first year the chances for the accomplishing of good were lost.

Mr. Westwood was, in appearance, an accomplished gentleman, and an interesting sermonizer. His efforts in the pulpit were not criticised unfavorably; and if he had not persisted in his exhibitions of an haughty spirit, accepting the situation in right good fellowship, he might have been very certainly a useful man in Omaha. As it was, he went to Conference under a cloud, pursued by a delegate from his charge instructed to ask for his removal. But he was reappointed only to meet such opposition as forced his presiding elder, A. G. White, to consent to his removal in three months. He was transferred to the Conference which he left to come West. His death occurred at Fredonia, New York, August, 1890.

Moses F. Shinn, in those days a handy man to use in filling a gap, and having reformed, was employed to take charge till some one might be secured permanently to stand in his stead as pastor. Mr. Shinn was a man of much experience in the ministry, and, at times, of great value to the Church. He was a cheerful companion, and a speaker of no mean qualities, sound in doctrine and a thoroughly orthodox Methodist."

After an interval of six weeks, during which diligent efforts had been made by presiding elder, bishop, and the leading lay members to find the right man to meet this crisis in affairs, he was finally found in the person of Gilbert De La Matyr, D. D., who entered upon the pastorate in 1869. Dr. De La Matyr was doubtless the equal in pulpit ability of any of his predecessors or successors. With his great abilities as a preacher was a large stock of common sense, together with a kindly sympathetic nature that gave him social access in helpful ways to all classes. He seized the situation with a firm grip, and soon became its master, and the Church starts out on a new era of prosperity. The first year of Dr. De La Matyr's pastorate coincides with the close of the second period, and we will resume later the story of this strong man's work.

Before passing, however, it is proper to note that during this period Omaha had residing in the city the following presiding elders: The first two years, Wm. M. Smith, who succeeded better as presiding elder than as pastor, being a wise administrator, and not coming in such constant contact with the people as to make his political views offensive. He was succeeded by Isaac Burns, who at the end of two years asked to be released that he might resume the pastorate, which to him was more congenial. It was providential that after three successful, helpful years in the pastorate in Omaha, Dr. Lemon was placed on the district and remained four years in Omaha as presiding elder. Doubtless his influence was of great value in steadying things during the pastorate of Dr. H. C. Westwood. He was followed by that natural born presiding elder, A. G. White, whose sound judgment was much needed in those critical times.

CHAPTER X.

OMAHA DISTRICT. (1861-1865.)

If we pass now to the Omaha District, we will find the same adverse conditions, with even more discouraging reports of the progress of the work, during the exciting war period.

Beginning with Bellevue, we find this circuit well manned by that sterling Methodist preacher, Martin Pritchard. He follows Jerome Spillman, whose two years' work was on the high pressure order, which, while it was of great value in permanent results, as we have seen, is likely to be followed by some reaction and loss, and Martin Pritchard did splendid service by keeping the high figure of ninety-six with nineteen probationers, though this shows a loss, as compared with the number Spillman left.

He is followed by that faithful and efficient pastor, David Hart, but he, too, is compelled to report a small loss, the number dropping down to eighty-two, with ten probationers.

Wm. A. Amsbary, a revivalist after the Spillman order, succeeds Hart, in 1864, and is able to report a gain of fifty during his year's pastorate.

T. M. Munhall follows Amsbary in 1865, and reports a loss of some twenty-five. Passing to the westward and tracing the progress of the work along the Platte Valley, we find Elkhorn Circuit, which appears for the first time,

and probably takes some of both Bellevue and Platte Valley; J. H. Alling is pastor. Of course it is impossible to say whether the sixty-four members and probationers he reports represents gain or loss. He is followed by T. Hoagland in 1862. He reports fifty-one, a loss of thirteen.

We now come to Platte Valley, that large, indefinite charge which is supposed to extend as far west as Columbus, at least. Theodore Hoagland, the pastor, will only find thirty-six members, and will be compelled to report only nineteen. This is Brother Hoagland's first appointment, he having been received on trial along with T. B. Lemon and J. B. Maxfield, but in sad contrast to these, he only continues for two years and drops out of the work; why, we have no means of knowing.

Joseph H. Alling, who entered the work in 1860, enters upon his last year in Nebraska as Theodore Hoagland's successor on the Platte Valley work and reports a gain of three members.

Martin Pritchard gave a year to this mission, yet strong and efficient as he is known to have been, he was only able to report an increase of five or six.

He is followed in 1865 by that faithful pastor, Jacob Adriance, who also reports only a small gain. All this while Fremont has been a part of this mission, but could not have grown much, for the whole mission had only twenty-four members and five probationers in 1865.

Ft. Kearney appears for the first time in 1861, with T. M. Munhall as circuit preacher. He remained but three months, being changed to Calhoun, a more productive field. As no one is sent to that far off field to fill out the year, and Ft. Kearney Circuit is dropped the next year, it is probable the presiding elder was justified in

abandoning the field and changing Munhall to Calhoun. It did not appear again till 1864, and was then, as also in 1865, left to be supplied, with no record as to who, if any one, found their way to that hard, distant field. But the Union Pacific is rapidly pushing its way up the Platte, and there will soon be enough people to justify the presence of a pastor, and, there will in a few years be a strong, vigorous Church.

In 1861 Calhoun received David Hart as pastor, but as noted elsewhere, at the end of three months he was changed to Omaha, and T. M. Munhall was changed from Ft. Kearney to fill out the year at Calhoun. This circuit had T. B. Lemon the year before, which accounts for the fact that there are thirty-one probationers with only thirty full members. The revivals then, as now, occurring in the winter, and Conference coming in the spring, probationers could not be received into full connection until the following Conference year, so the number of probationers left was a fair index to the extent of the revival the preceding year. It will be noted that T. B. Lemon usually left some probationers, for he almost invariably had a revival. According to this standard there must have been revivals that year under Munhall's ministry, also, for sixty probationers are left to the care of his successor.

That successor was J. B. Maxfield, the name of the circuit being again changed to De Soto. As noted elsewhere, Maxfield passes on to Decatur the next year, and is followed by the old rough-and-ready pioneer, Isaac Burns, who puts in a year of faithful work. E. T. McLaughlin is received on trial in the Conference of 1864 and succeeds Burns on De Soto Circuit. The Minutes of

1865 record his appointment as a missionary to Montana, but it seems that he did not go but supplied the Decatur work that year and continued two years and dropped out. He leaves twenty-four probationers, which indicates that he had some revivals. There now appears as pastor of this circuit, A. G. White, a name that will become a household word in many parts of Nebraska. Rev. W. A. Wilson writes me that there are still standing and growing, at old Ft. Calhoun, in front of what was then the parsonage which he built while on the circuit, some large trees, which White had planted, typical of the permanence and healthy growth of much of the results of this strong, thorough man's work in after life. He will be heard from again, wisely and triumphantly leading the hosts of King Immanuel. We have already heard of his brave leadership in defense of Pawnee Ranch against 1,000 yelling savage Sioux. We will always find him ready for emergencies and master of the situation, however difficult. During his first year at De Soto the membership, including forty-three probationers, is nearly doubled.

W. A. Amsbary goes to Tekamah in 1861. The circuit included Decatur and the next year the name of the circuit is changed to Decatur and Amsbary returns for the second year. But even this aggressive revivalist, whose success elsewhere in building up the Church through revivals has been phenomenal, reports at the end of his full legal term a loss of ten. He is followed, as before noted in a personal reference, by Dr. Maxfield, who after a short time is called to the Government Training School at Genoa. As good Sister Ashley says, there was "consternation" at the loss of such a man, whose ministry had already taken strong hold of the entire com-

munity, and promised a year of great success. The circuit was supplied the balance of the year by Joel Mason, but hardly rallied that year from the discouragement occasioned by the departure of Maxfield.

In 1864 Jacob Adriance is sent to Decatur mission and finds a disheartened people almost ready to give up. But by a year of faithful work, such as he always did, he left the charge in good condition for an advance when the change in the tide of affairs, which was soon to come, arrived. He is followed by A. J. Swartz in 1865.

Dakota Mission has for pastor for two years, beginning with 1861, Z. B. Turman, whose presence is a guarantee of two years of hard, aggressive work, but by some mistake Dakota does not appear in the statistics and we know nothing of the results of his labor.

He is followed by W. A. Amsbary in 1863. The omission of the statistics of the charge the year before makes a comparative statement impossible, but that the field was a discouraging one is evident from the fact that after three years' faithful service by two such men as Turman and Amsbary, there were only eighteen members. For the next two years Dakota is left to be supplied and we have no means of knowing who, if any one, was secured for this purpose, and as there is no report of statistics, we can not know whether there was gain or loss.

This ends the detailed statement of each charge during the war period so far as such details can be obtained from meager records, and other inadequate sources of information. Only two churches have been built during the stress and excitement of the war period. One of these was, as noted, bought of the Congregationalists at Brownville, and the other was erected at a country appointment

on the charge, during the pastorate of Hiram Burch, who had already made a reputation as church builder, by the erection of the first Methodist church ever built in Nebraska, at Nebraska City. In 1863, during the pastorate of J. G. Miller at Plattsmouth, a small building that had been used for a saloon was purchased, and made to serve as a place of worship for several years.

According to the Minutes there were reported in statistics for 1861 four churches, including the one at Brownville, and one at Bellevue, but which is not reported in any succeeding copies of Minutes, and must, like the Florence Church, have been sold to pay debt. In the statistics for 1861 even Nebraska City church building is omitted, because there was no report from that charge, but it ought to be counted. Including all these Nebraska Methodism started out in the war period with five church buildings, and up to 1865, loses one and gains two, making a net gain of one church for the period.

They do better on parsonages, however. Starting out in 1861 with only one, in 1863 there are two built, one at Pawnee City on Table Rock Charge, by Brother Burch, and one at Falls City by Brother King. In 1864 Brother Lemon reports one at Omaha, and Wm. M. Smith one at Nebraska City. But according to the statistics in the Minutes of 1865 both that at Omaha and the one at Nebraska City drop out, but that of Nebraska City is reported each year afterward. This leaves the net gain for the period of the war, four, including the one purchased at Plattsmouth that year, during the pastorate of W. A. Amsbary.

Aside from what has been done by those faithful workmen in the direct interest of the Church, great things

have occurred on the wider arena of the national life. The Union has been saved and slavery abolished. Before the war Nebraska and Kansas had been thrown open for the admission of slavery, on equal terms with freedom. Now Nebraska is forever dedicated to freedom, greatly to the gratification of such men as H. T. Clarke and Andrew Cook and hundreds of others who had come in the "fifties" to make Nebraska free, and to the joy of all lovers of their kind.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS, 1861-1865.

There has not been much growth in any direction during these stormy times. Omaha District gains sixty in the four years, and Nebraska District gains, on the face of the statistics, 261. But the important station of Nebraska City was not reported in 1861. If we add the ninety that were reported for Nebraska City in 1860 to the total reported in 1861, the net gain for the period will be only 171, or a total for the Conference of 231, being an average of fifty-six per year for the entire Conference.

But under the circumstances that was a great achievement. The Church more than held its own, while the population of the territory has at times decreased. It is well organized and full of holy enthusiasm as it faces the new and more hopeful future.

That future is bright with promise for Nebraska Methodism. Several causes will operate to bring a large population in the next five years. Among those is the free homestead law which went into operation in 1862, but up to 1865 had not attracted many to Nebraska. But now the tide sets in strongly. The war being over, many of the old soldiers hasten to Nebraska to find a home.

Tecumseh and many other places are started largely by the old veterans.

The spaces on the open prairie left vacant in the older counties rapidly fill up. The first settlers had taken claims along the streams where there was some timber, many doubting whether people could live at all out on the prairies away from timber. Even as late as 1865, when Rev. P. B. Ruch ventured out some twenty miles on the wild prairie of Richardson County, his friends deemed him reckless. But he and many others had already demonstrated the richness of these prairie farms and increasing confidence served to fill up the vacant portions of the older counties, so that up to 1870, while the population increased from 28,841 in 1860, to 122,993 in 1870 (nearly all this increase occurring after 1865), the increase found homes in the older counties and the western line of the frontier remained substantially the same as in 1861.

In anticipation of this increase, a new district is formed in 1865, called Brownville District, with that rugged old leader, C. W. Giddings as presiding elder, while J. G. Miller succeeds Davis on the Nebraska City District. This arrangement, however, only continues till 1867, when the number of districts is again reduced to two, with T. B. Lemon on the Omaha District and C. W. Giddings on the Nebraska City District. The number of districts remains the same till 1869, when the number of circuits and stations have increased to thirty-nine, making another district necessary. A. G. White is made presiding elder of the Omaha District, T. B. Lemon of the Nebraska City District, and C. W. Giddings of the Lincoln District.

We pause a moment to note some facts relating to that forceful personality and efficient preacher, C. W. Giddings.

C. W. Giddings had given twenty-five years to the ministry before coming to Nebraska in 1858, having joined the old Oneida Conference, New York, in 1833. After many years of toil in the East, his health broke down and he came to Nebraska to recuperate if possible. In a few years he was so far restored that having been transferred to the Nebraska Conference, he re-entered the work as presiding elder of the Brownville District. He afterward served two years on the Lincoln District, but the old infirmities, together with advancing years, made it necessary for him to take the superannuated relation in 1871. He retired to his farm at Table Rock, and there, with his devoted wife, he lived in peace, looking back over a long life well spent, and forward to the life that never ends.

While not able to give many years to the Nebraska work, they were years of great influence for good. The preachers soon came to recognize him as a superior man, and by their votes sent him as delegate to the General Conference of 1868. His death occurred December 23, 1879. His brethren place on record, in 1880, the following estimate of their fallen comrade: Brother Giddings was a man of more than ordinary ability, and like the most of men of such rank, he had his peculiar characteristics. He was possessed of great will power, and hence of great decision and firmness. He also had great endurance and persistent activity. He was a thorough and devout Arminian Methodist of the old style; jealous for the purity and power and zealous for the success of

the Gospel—elements that made him a true and able minister of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"His sermons evinced deep thought and a comprehensive understanding. He was a workman at his calling. Sin and error suffered mortal thrusts by the scathing shafts of his incisive gospel logic. Finally his devotion to the cause in retirement was evinced by his fidelity to every religious and reformatory interest of society. As Sunday-school superintendent he will be missed and long remembered. And, as might be expected, he died as the good man dies, quoting to his pastor the significant lines:

> "'Not a cloud doth arise to darken the skies,
> Or hide for a moment my Lord from my eyes.'

"Blessing upon the family, honor to the record, and peace to the memory of one of life's true heroes, Charles W. Giddings."

CHAPTER XI.

(1865-1870.)

THE task of tracing the history of the next five years will be a more pleasant one. The struggle for existence, both for Territory and Church, is over, and it will be our pleasant duty henceforth to note the rapid march of progress in all directions, which, though at times will be retarded, will not cease.

The era of free homesteads and rapid movement of population westward, enhanced by the large foreign immigration that is coming from Europe, and stimulated by the building of the Union Pacific and other lines of railroads, has set in.

The era of helpful subordinate institutions in the Church has also set in. The Missionary Society, which had begun its work in 1819, had, up to this time, been the only helpful agency in the field. It was seen what an immense advantage it had been in maintaining a working force in the field, being often the chief reliance of the scantily paid itinerant in his effort to keep the wolf from the door. It was manifest that if this helpful agency was re-enforced by another that would enable the faithful pastor who was rapidly forming classes out of the Methodist settlers who were coming to the West by the thousands and through his revival efforts adding to them young converts by the scores and hundreds, to build churches and thus to house and care for them more effi-

ciently, the results would be larger and more permanent. As usual, when this great need was pressing, God raised up the needed help in the organization of the Church Extension Society in 1865.

This need became acute when the problem of evangelizing the Western prairie country confronted the Church. When the hardy pioneers planted the Church in Ohio and Indiana, they found an abundance of native material, which only needed a small amount of money to enable willing hands to hew it and place it in shape and construct a church that served their purpose very well. But this was not possible in Iowa and Nebraska and other prairie countries. True, rather than go without any shelter, they constructed the rude sod church, which would temporarily serve the purpose, but could not be permanent. Hence it was an event of immense import to Nebraska Methodism when the Church Extension Society was born. However, it was several years before it got its work so well in hand that it could be of much assistance, but it was a beginning full of promise that should be realized in full measure later on.

During the five years, from 1865 to 1870, a number of preachers who had rendered efficient service for a number of years, either passed on to other fields, as did the aggressive Amsbary, who in 1867 went to Colorado, or through failing health were compelled to take a non-effective relation, as did J. T. Cannon, Jesse L. Fort, Hiram Burch, David Hart, J. G. Miller, Isaac Burns, and M. F. Shinn. Besides these, H. H. Skaggs, F. B. Pitzer, A. Williams, located in 1868; and in 1867 A. G. White was appointed chaplain in the army. But others rapidly took their places. During these five years there came in on

trial, in 1866, David Marquette, A. Williams, and A. J. Folden; in 1867, Benjamin C. Golliday, L. F. Britt, Joel Warner, Joseph H. Presson, William A. Presson, H. P. Mann; in 1868, Joel A. Van Anda, T. R. Sweet, R. S. Hawks; in 1869, David Marquette, Francis M. Esterbrook, J. W. Martin.

Concerning myself it will be noted that I was twice received on trial, which may need explanation concerning my own and other like cases during these earlier times.

At the close of my first year I felt the need of a better education and determined to go to Garrett Biblical School. There was no provision then, as now, by which those taking such a step, which may be as much involved in the call to the ministry as preaching, could continue their relation and be left without appointment to attend school, but they must be discontinued, and then when they resumed active work, be received on trial again.

Among these recruits are men who have risen to high distinction for usefulness. It will not be regarded as extravagant praise by those who know the facts to say that A. L. Folden, who, though not entering the Conference till near forty years of age, has made a record in the way of solid achievements that will compare favorably with any of his co-laborers; then there is L. F. Britt, the Pressons, Joel A Van Anda, F. M. Esterbrook, and others, who, on various fields, have rendered splendid service.

Besides these raw recruits, there were some who transferred into this Conference, bringing well-trained minds and consecrated hearts, and most of them devoted themselves to the work in Nebraska the remainder of their lives. Of these we mention a few. Just at the close of the war period we saw C. W.

Giddings step into the arena; in 1866, J. J. Roberts, than whom Nebraska has had no abler expounder of the truth, joined our ranks, bringing with him a wife who has also been a power for good as all who know Mrs. M. E. Roberts will readily testify. And who does not know her, whose "name is in all the Churches;" then there were W. S. Blackburn, J. M. Adair, H. C. Westwood, George S. Alexander, Gilbert De La Matyr, S. P. Van Doozer, and George W. Elwood, all of whom wrought faithfully, and some powerfully, for the cause of the Master. Then J. B. Maxfield, who took charge of the Indian Training School in 1863, resumes his place in the pastorate in 1867, greatly strengthening the forces.

These gains to the working forces so outnumber the losses, that in 1869 we have thirty-five receiving appointment at the hands of Bishop Janes, as compared with eighteen, who were assigned to work by Bishop Scott in 1865.

With such accessions to the working forces we may expect corresponding growth in the work, and will not be disappointed. The work is already assuming the twofold form of developing into strength and more perfect organization the older charges, and pushing the work along the frontier, though the frontier features of the work will predominate for some time to come.

Under such pastors as the saintly Davis and the stirring Alexander, Nebraska City maintains its place in the lead in membership, and is abreast with any in all that makes a strong, aggressive Methodist Church.

Omaha makes rapid progress toward permanent conditions under Slaughter, Westwood, and De La Matyr. If there was some trouble, it was doubtless because the

Church was crowded forward too rapidly under the aggressive Westwood, whose Eastern ideas did not fit into Western conditions. But there was a decided gain in membership and all other elements of local strength and influence.

Before passing we should glance at some of the more important places, and note, as far as possible, their progress toward their present commanding positions. Peru has assumed special importance as the seat of the State Normal, which was established there after the refusal of the Conference to accept their offer. The Methodist Church has supplied the positive religious and moral influence needed in an educational center, through a succession of faithful pastors and great revivals. J. J. Roberts, R. C. Johnson, J. W. Taylor, and A. J. Swartz successively served this charge during this period. At Brownville, David Hart, B. C. Golliday, and D. H. May served as pastors. Falls City was mightily stirred and strengthened by revivals and faithful pastoral work under W. A. Presson, followed by Martin Pritchard. Table Rock received the Gospel at the hands of M. Pritchard and L. W. Smith in these years.

Pawnee stands out by itself as an appointment for the first time in 1868, with W. A. Presson as pastor for two years, during which it is strengthened by a good revival.

Beatrice is served by H. P. Mann, R. C. Johnson, and George W. Elwood. Tecumseh makes great progress under the labors of A. L. Folden and L. F. Britt, as might well be expected. Over 100 conversions result from the labors of Brother Folden, assisted by Joseph H. Presson.

Plattsmouth had the misfortune to lose W. A. Amsbary about this time, but rallied under the able ministry

and wise administration of J. J. Roberts. During his three years a substantial church was built.

After two years' pastorate by faithful Adriance, Fremont had the service of Joel A. Van Anda for three years, during which their first church was built, and the charge moved rapidly forward along all lines of growth, and began to take rank as one of the best charges.

These are the principal points, which, with a single exception, Methodism has developed into strength and influence in the community.

Father Van Anda.

John A. Van Anda.

Probably to no two families has Fremont Methodism been more indebted for its growth and influence than to the two Rogers families who were members from the first. These were joined in 1867 by the Van Anda families, father and mother and two sons, Joel A. and John A. While J. F. Hansen, N. V. Biles, R. B. Schneider, O. F. Glidden, and many other excellent families came still later, it seems appropriate that the Rogers and Van Andas receive something more than mere mention, they having stood in special relation to the early history of the Church.

The two brothers, E. H. and L. H. Rogers, who were members of the first class formed in Fremont, in 1857, and during their whole lives were pillars in that Church, are worthy of further mention.

E. H. Rogers, the more aggressive of the two, after twenty-five years of great usefulness in all the relations of responsibility to which a layman may be called, such was his high standing as a stanch and influential Methodist, that the ministry, after his death in 1881, in the prime of life, do him the honor of giving him the rare distinction of prominent mention among their honored dead, usually reserved for members of the Conference. In the Minutes of 1881 they place on record this brief account of his life, and appreciation of his worth, which I transcribe and make my own: "Eliphaz Hibbard Rogers was born in Litchfield, New York, January 12, 1830, and died in Vera Cruz, Mexico, August, 1881. He obtained a good academic education, and at the age of sixteen engaged in school teaching, and a few years later in the practice of law, in both of which professions he was successful. Twenty-five years ago he came to Nebraska and located in the valley of the Platte, where now is the city of Fremont. In 1858 he was elected to the legislature. From 1863 to 1867 he was county clerk; and while yet in the office he was elected to the last Territorial Council, and afterward to the first State Senate of Nebraska; and in both bodies he was chosen president, and served with marked ability. At the time of his death he was United States Consul at Vera Cruz, Mexico. In early life he became a Christian and a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church. His experience was clear, constant, and satisfactory. He never compromised prin-

ciple for worldly gain. He brought all his secular interests to the bar of an enlightened judgment, and then acted according to its dictates. His piety found intelligent expression in a system of good works. From the first he devoted one-tenth of his income to religious uses. For awhile after coming to Nebraska that tenth was very small, and there were urgent demands for it in his family and business; but to his mind and conscience it would have been robbery of God to use it, and he never did. In all his Christian experience he proved the truthfulness of Paul's teaching, that godliness is profitable to the life that now is. His life was a practical refutation of the popular slander that the children of clergymen are more reckless and more indifferent to sacred things than other children. He was the son of Rev. L. C. Rogers, who spent all the years of his manhood in the Methodist ministry in the State of New York; and our lamented brother grew to man's estate in the home of an itinerant, sharing all of its privations and self-denial. The Church loved him and trusted him, and he was twice lay delegate to the General Conference, serving with marked ability upon one of its most important committees. He was an accomplished orator, a model class-leader, a faithful friend, a devoted husband and father. In short, he was a Christian in the best meaning of the term, and "the end of that man was peace."

While, as said before, Lucius H. Rogers was less aggressive, he was permitted to give nearly half a century to the Church he loved, filling faithfully the many posts of duty to which the Church called him. He was on the Commission that founded Nebraska Wesleyan, and was for many years an honored member of the Board of Trus-

tees. His pastor, Rev. F. H. Sanderson, D. D., speaks thus tenderly of this departed saint:

"Lucius Henry Rogers was born in Fayetteville, New York, March 20, 1834, and died in Fremont, Nebraska, September 11, 1903. He was the son of the late Rev. Lucius Cary Rogers, who labored a lifetime in the Oneida Conference. Brother Rogers imbibed the truths of religion at his mother's knee, from his father's lips, in the modest parsonage of the long ago. He was cradled in the lap of piety. In the dawn of manhood he received the truth, and the emancipating power of that knowledge made him free. Himself and his brother, the late Eliphaz H. Rogers, and three more devout Methodists, organized the first Methodist Episcopal Church of Fremont, Nebraska, forty-six years ago. As a charter member of this noble Church, and an official of the same for forty years, he demonstrated his faith in God and love to the Church. By a well ordered and consistent life and conversation, and by his large and constant contributions to its welfare, he ever said: 'I love Thy Church, O God!' In 1888 he was elected a delegate to the General Conference in New York. His spiritual experience was a living reality. His faith in God and his blessed experience of the power of Christ to save and keep, preserved him from all skeptical doubts touching the authority and inspiration of the Bible and the immortality of the soul. His spare moments were not given to folly or to the acquiring of political renown, or even to the achievement of commercial fame. Unostentatious, modest, always 'esteeming others better than himself,' his leisure was devoted to substantial reading and the sublime work of doing good. The Church, the poor, the great ameliorating agencies of our times, were

all objects of his ceaseless regard. His personal assistance, his prayers and sympathies, his purse, were ever at the command of religion, philanthropy, and charity. All the older bishops and many of the senior ministers knew and loved him. His hospitable home was always open to the Methodist itinerant. He was universally beloved and esteemed. Until ill-health prevented, he was ever at his post in the house of God. 'He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith.' "

The two Rogers families were soon joined by another family, the Van Anda's, mother, father, and two sons, Joel A. and John A. Joel A. Van Anda was pastor of the Church at Fremont when the first church was built and Fremont Methodism took a fresh start in its steady march towards its present strength and influence. The year the church was completed, in 1870, the Conference held the first of a long series of sessions in Fremont, at every one of which the hospitality has been most cordial.

Joel A. remained as pastor the full term, but did not stay long in Nebraska, being summoned to the pastorate of some of the most important Churches in other States. His whole career has been eminently successful.

Father and Mother Van Anda remained many years as bright and shining lights, and John A. Van Anda remained in active business in Fremont and in faithful service in official relations to the Church until last summer, when after long and intense suffering from rheumatism, he passed to the heavenly country. His devoted wife still tarries among the working forces of the Church. Fremont Methodism owes much to the Van Anda family.

We find many new charges are formed, yet mostly within the area already partially occupied. In the Omaha

District we find Wood River and De Witt Charges in 1866; Fremont in 1867; City Mission, West Point, and North Platte in 1868, and Schuyler in 1869. In some cases, like Fremont, these had been parts of circuits, but had become heads of circuits or stations.

In Nebraska City District we have Blue River and Helena in 1866, and Lancaster in 1867; Cub Creek, Upper Nemaha, and Lincoln in 1868; and London, Salem, and Blue Springs in 1869.

Then we have the new Lincoln District, with the new circuits, Ashland, Oak Creek, and Northwest Blue, in 1869.

Some of these new charges that have their birth during these five years, will become important centers in due time. Among these destined to realize this larger future are Fremont, Schuyler, Wood River, which should have been named Grand Island; Blue Springs, Ashland, and last, but not least, Lincoln. Methodism in this place, the capital of the State, will, under the leadership of H. T. Davis, its first pastor, and his successors, soon forge to the front and ever after maintain its place in the lead. There was one of these new charges, West Point, that has defied the best efforts of faithful men, and has become defunct.

In 1865 the Minutes report six churches and six parsonages, while in 1869 we have thirteen churches and twelve parsonages. The membership has also nearly doubled, being 2,973, including probationers, in 1869, as compared with 1,564 in 1865.

It would be most interesting and profitable to trace the history of each of these stations and circuits, and to watch the work of the pastors who achieved these

splendid results, but this has become impossible for want of space. We only know that such results could only come of the work of consecrated men blessed of God in the salvation of souls, and the building up of the Church along all lines. As we view these splendid achievements, we must say, with the Master, "Well done," and hasten on to survey the labors and struggles and triumphs of the period from 1870 to 1880.

CHAPTER XII.

THIRD PERIOD. (1870-1880.)

This period is one of thrilling interest. It is characterized by a great influx of people into the State and great revivals in the Church. While up to 1870 the population had grown to 122,993, in the next five years it increased to 247,280, more people coming into the State in five years than had come the preceding fifteen years. By 1880 there were 452,542, a total increase during the decade of 323,549, while the increase during the preceding decade had been less than 95,000.

The frontier had, up to this time, extended but little, if any, over one hundred miles west of the Missouri River, except up along the line of the Union Pacific Railroad, and there but few except railroad employees had settled. But now this tide of immigration rapidly extended over the table-lands of Butler, Seward, Polk, York, Fillmore, Saline, Gage, and Jefferson Counties, pushing out up the Republican River in the south part of the State, up the Platte and Loup in the central part, and up the Elkhorn in the north.

If I were to seek for a single word to express the situation during this period, especially the first four years, that word would be expansion. This expansion was twofold. The growth of the older charges through accretions, conversions, revivals, and more thorough organization. Then the territorial expansion towards the west line of the State corresponding with the extension of the set-

tlements through the vast immigration of that period. Then the growth of the population within the area already partially settled, and the corresponding growth of the Church, by the multiplication of appointments on the circuits and resultant increase in number of stations, circuits and districts. In 1863, D. S. Davis is appointed to Wahoo Circuit. He starts in with five appointments and closes up with fourteen, and out of that one circuit there has grown four stations and circuits.

Often where there was no circuit in the beginning of the year, some presiding elder would send a man to make one, or possibly, as often happened, some zealous local preacher, or superannuated veteran, would launch out and make one. Nor were these new circuits wholly the result of the coming of Methodist settlers who only needed to be hunted up. Many of the preachers possessing the missionary spirit, would go into neighborhoods where there were perhaps no members, or not enough to organize a class, hold revival-meetings, get a number converted, and thus extend the work. Then the head of a circuit would grow to the extent of being able to support a preacher, and there would be a station made of one, and a circuit made of the rest.

Rapid as was the growth of population and the extension of the area of settled country, the Church kept pace with the rapid advance, and few, if any, Methodists had time to backslide before the helpful itinerant visited in their homes, bringing their Gospel and the means of grace. In many cases the growth of the Church was in excess of the population, great revivals bringing many into the kingdom.

L. W. Smith tells of some camp-meetings and reviv-

als in the southeastern part of the Territory: "In 1862, Brother Munhall and myself had a large circuit, Falls City, Rulo, Salem, and four other points, country schoolhouses, of which I have forgotten the names. In 1861 we had one of the most successful camp-meetings ever held in that part of the country not far from Falls City. Brother King was on the charge at that time. I went down from Table Rock to assist him. A week had passed with no special results. The preachers had all left except Brother King and myself. On Tuesday night I preached with unusual liberty and at the close of the sermon I invited them to stand up and sing. But we did not get to sing, as the people, when they stood up, began to fall all over the camp-ground, till about fifty were down and we had to take care of them. The meeting continued then about eight days longer."

"We sent out and obtained more ministerial help and the result was glorious, very many conversions. So in 1862 we continued the revival influence and gathered much from the past and had many conversions at different points that year. In 1861 L. held a glorious camp-meeting on Table Rock Circuit, on the South Fork of Nemaha, at which there were many conversions."

At the beginning of this period, A. L. Folden and J. H. Presson were on the Tecumseh Circuit, and report 300 conversions, and in 1871 this same A. L. Folden is blessed with a great revival at Mt. Pleasant, with eighty-five accessions, and at Eight Mile Grove with sixty-five. The following year, on the same charge, with John Gallagher as junior preacher, there were one hundred conversions at Weeping Water. To A. L. Folden's work on this charge, his presiding elder pays this tribute: "Mt.

Pleasant Circuit embraces the central part of Cass County. This is one of the oldest, wealthiest, and most Methodistic circuits in the country. Having a live man as pastor, live men as leaders and stewards, live women at the head of the Sabbath-school, and a live membership, Mt. Pleasant is emphatically a live place. Brother Folden, having no children of his own, is nevertheless very deeply interested in the welfare of the children of others, and spares no pains in their religious instruction; and he has had the privilege of seeing all the regular attendants of the Sabbath-school at Mt. Pleasant and Eight Mile Grove happily converted to God. Had we but one advice to give to ministers and laymen, that advice would be, 'Take care of the lambs.' This is the most important work of all the departments of the Church; and this work Brother Folden most faithfully performed. Under his efficient ministry, Mt. Pleasant, Eight Mile Grove, and Weeping Water have been visited with great revivals of religion, and multitudes, old and young, have been made the recipients of saving grace. Over 150 have been converted to God. At Weeping Water, a church of the best limestone, thirty-two by sixty feet, is being erected. The walls are partly up, and the material is on the ground for its completion, and it will be finished early the coming summer. When done, it will be one of the most beautiful and substantial church edifices in the bounds of the Conference. There has been an increase in every department of the Church on this circuit the past year."

If we follow A. L. Folden from one charge to another, we find him building churches and holding revival meetings wherever he goes. At Seward, he completes a church and holds a revival at a country appointment in

1874. At Ashland in 1875, he was met, when he drove up with his goods, by a prominent official member, and told it was not wise to unload his goods; that they could not support him, and he would starve. He staid. He was blessed with a wonderful revival resulting in two hundred conversions and one hundred and fifty uniting with the Church. It is said that he made this entry in the official record: "They tried to starve me, but I would n't starve worth a cent." As might be expected, he is returned in 1876, and has a great revival at Coffman school-house, five miles north of Ashland. Among the conversions were two prize fighters, one horse racer, and a fiddler.

On the South Bend Circuit we find two new churches to his credit, and in 1878 we find him on Lincoln Circuit, organizing in South Lincoln what has since become Trinity Church, the first year; and the second, holding a revival-meeting at which over one hundred were saved. We see this consecrated man of God, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, beginning, as he says, each day by singing "Nearer, my God, to Thee," attended with a flame of revival power throughout this period, and there are over 1,000 conversions in ten years.

But others are having revivals. Isaac Burns has sixty-five conversions on the Nebraska City Circuit in 1871. Presiding elders bring in cheering reports of revivals from all over the field. J. J. Roberts is at Blair, but extends his work in the country, holding revivals in the cabins of the people, with many conversions, among them William Peck, a well-educated Prussian, who afterward became one of our ablest preachers. J. M. Adair, assisted by F. B. Pitzer, has eighty-four conversions on

the Arizona Circuit, and the membership of old Dakota Circuit is increased by five hundred per cent under the labors of S. P. Van Doozer; and J. W. Perkins reports ninety-three accessions on the Logan Valley Mission.

Of W. A. Presson's work at Beatrice in 1871, Presiding Elder Lemon has this to say: "The past year has been a most successful year at Beatrice. At the beginning of the Conference year there was a very small society worshiping in a small school-house. Brother W. A. Presson was appointed to this charge, and on his way from Fremont, the seat of the Conference, to Pawnee City, his former charge, he went through Beatrice, finding stone walls standing in a very desirable part of town, having been built for a Union Church and left uninclosed. He bought the property and raised a subscription and began a church and finished it during the year at a cost of about $5,000, and raised all the money about Beatrice except $500 borrowed from the Church Extension Society, the whole being provided for by subscription. After the dedication of this church God poured out His Spirit and over eighty, many of the principal families of the town, were converted and joined the Church."

Dr. Maxfield reports that Brother Presson had a gracious revival the next year. The presiding elder reports that L. Oliver was blessed in 1871 with gracious revivals in some neighborhoods on the West Blue Mission, and in some cases all in the neighborhood were converted.

Presiding Elder A. G. White reports for the Omaha District in 1872, gracious revivals at Omaha, Fremont, and Schuyler. Of the Eldred Circuit the presiding elder tells the story of victory in these words:

"Eldred Mission was left to be supplied, and Richard

Pearson reappointed pastor. Brother Pearson came from England about two years ago, and on his arrival he was received into our Church and appointed to the north half of Saunders County, in which we had no Church organization. He was recommended for admission into the traveling connection one year ago, but affliction in his family prevented his attending Conference. He has labored the past year with great success. He is a sort of spiritual fire-brand, bearing light and heat and power all over the circuit.

DANIEL S. DAVIS.

"Church interests developed on his hands, demanding more help, and Daniel S. Davis was licensed to preach and appointed assistant some months ago. These brothers have given the people a rare example of Christian love for each other and for the cause of Christ. Every week has witnessed an advance.

"The secret of their success is they have taken counsel of God and allowed Him to lead them; and when He leads them they go 'conquering and to conquer.' These brothers report over two hundred members and probationers, and they are both recommended by the District Conference for admission into the traveling connection."

During the time these devoted men worked they had about 200 conversions.

Brother Davis is returned to Wahoo Circuit the next year after being received on trial, in 1873, and as noted, began with five and ended with fourteen appointments. The way things grew in those days is well illustrated in

this incident. He sometimes traveled sixty-five miles on Sabbath and preached four times, often not having time to eat his meals. At what was called Cottonwood, he went for the first time to preach at 2.30 on the Sabbath. While preaching, a woman jumped up from her seat and cried out, addressing her husband, "Jake, you married me when I was seventeen years old, and I was a Christian then, but have been afraid to tell of it, though it has been forty years." He broke down, saying, "Why, I didn't know it." She came to the altar to rejoice that she had found courage to confess Christ before men, especially before her husband, and he came, seeking and finding the Savior. Brother Davis continued the meetings five days and the results were sixty-five conversions and a new class.

Another incident occurred during this meeting, showing how God's Spirit can get hold of the worst cases. Davis had visited an eccentric and noted character called "General" Dane, and been welcomed to stay if he would take care of his own horse. This Brother Davis preferred to do, and staid. About daybreak one morning Dane said to him, "I want to speak to you." He led the way to a large elm-tree, and pointing to a limb, he said: "Several years ago I caught a horse thief with the stolen horse, and knowing him to be guilty, I hung him to that limb. Now, is there salvation for me?" The pastor answered, "That depends on your motive." Dane explained that before that all the horse thieves who had been caught and brought to trial had been acquitted, and he was tired of that and decided to execute one, anyhow. Davis then said: "The sin was a crimson one, but the promise is that 'though your sins be as scarlet, they shall

be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.'" He took courage, sought the Lord, and was happily converted.

Another case was that of a fiddler by the name of G. W. Damon. During a meeting held by Brother Davis, Damon's wife came to the altar. On the way home he told her that thing must be stopped. The next night she got ready to go to the service and he said, "If you go, I will leave you." She answered, "I have always been a true, obedient wife to you, but when it is a question of saving my soul, I must obey God rather than man." She started to the service and he, taking his fiddle under his arm, started off in the other direction. By the time he went half a mile he said to himself aloud, "What a fool I am to leave the best woman on earth because she does not want to go to h—l." He turned at once and hastened back home, leaving his fiddle, and hurried on to the place where the service was held. She had gone in and he followed. When the invitation was given, Damon rose and said to his followers in sin: "You have been keeping step to my music, now follow me and I will play you a tune that will end in heaven." And with that he went to the altar, and altar and aisles were soon filled with penitent seekers. But Damon was not converted at the altar, and about two o'clock that night, he cried out to his wife, "Carrie, you must get up and pray for me or I will be in hell before daylight." He was gloriously converted. He was soon after licensed to preach and served the Church in after years as a supply, doing some excellent work in that capacity.

But this rapid expansion, especially during the first three years of this period, is seen in the increase of dis-

tricts. Up to 1869 there were not enough charges to make more than two districts. True, in 1865 they tried three districts, but in two years abandoned one of them and went back to two.

But in four years from 1869 there were six districts. But in nothing is this expansion seen more than in the increase in membership, from 1870 to 1874. This increase is over 3,000. That is, there were as many accessions to the Church in these four years as there had been in the entire fifteen preceding years. While from 1874 the advance is not so rapid, yet another 3,000 is added in six years, making a total of over 6,000 additions in the ten years, over twice as many as had been added in the preceding fifteen years.

It was during this third period that an era of railroad building began which determined the drift of population, built up innumerable towns that became centers of trade for the rural population, and must be seized and held by the Church. As we have seen the Union Pacific had already been extended through the entire length of the center of the State in 1867, the connecting link completing the great transcontinental line to the Pacific Coast having been formed at Ogden in May, 1869. Though the portion embraced within the State of Nebraska had been completed several years, for some reason there had not been attracted along its line a sufficient population, or people of such a character that even the Methodist Church could get hold of and organize into Methodist societies. Only three appointments west of Kearney, a distance of nearly 300 miles, appeared on the list as late as 1880, and only one of these, North Platte, had developed any strength, and that only had a membership of

sixty-nine and five probationers. But we had already gone as far as Sidney, and were on the ground eagerly watching developments, and ready to seize any point and effect an organization at the first opportunity.

It was during this period that the great B. & M. Railroad built its line out from Plattsmouth through the rich and populated counties of Cass, Saunders, and Lancaster, and the unsettled or sparsely settled counties of Saline, Fillmore, Clay, Adams, and Kearney. Then extending south to the Republican River, pushed its line westward along the valley of that river through the entire length of the State, to its destination at Denver.

In the meanwhile the St. Joseph and Denver line was constructed along the Little Blue through the counties of Jefferson, Thayer, Clay, Adams, and Hall, to its destination at Grand Island. In the north part of the State the Chicago, Minneapolis and St. Paul was extended from Omaha to Sioux City, and a branch of the same system was extended from Emerson thirty miles west of Sioux City to Norfolk, and the F. E. & M. V. pushed its line far to the Northwest along the valley of the Elkhorn. At the same time the Midland was built west from Nebraska City through Lincoln and Seward westward, and the Atchison line was built from the southeast corner of the State to Lincoln.

These railroads no longer waited for settlements to be formed and then built to them, but inaugurated the new idea of sending out their experts and engineers and ascertained where settlements might be made, and built their lines into those sections of the State that best suited their purpose and took possession of the territory that naturally belonged to their system, and proceeded to develop it by attracting settlers.

These railroads are of interest as bearing on the religious development of the country. First, they have vastly increased the amount of work which presiding elders as well as bishops can do, and have frequently aided the work on the frontier by giving free transportation to presiding elders, reduced rates on material for churches, in addition to the usual half-fare rates extended to all clergymen. In the next place they change and determine the centers of population, collecting many of the inhabitants into villages. It often happens that what were once prosperous and strong rural circuits, with churches and parsonages, are hampered or obliterated by the construction of a railroad and building of a town near by, and the building up of a church in the town. This was the case with old Mt. Pleasant, one of the strongest rural circuits, when the Missouri Pacific was extended up the Weeping Water and Nehawka established. In this way our rural work has been very much curtailed.

These facts have been set forth in detail because the operation of these combined causes brought about in these few years the extension of the frontier almost or quite to the west line of the State. A line west of Jefferson County, in the south part of the State, and extending to the west of Cedar County in the north, with still much unsettled country east of that line, and being an average distance of about sixty miles west of the Missouri River, marked, with sufficient accuracy the extent of the settlements at the beginning of 1870, except along the Union Pacific Railroad, being less than one-sixth of the entire area of the State. To this narrow strip, averaging sixty miles in width, which it had required fifteen years to set-

tle, much of it being still frontier work, there were suddenly added 200 miles along the southern tier of counties, and 100 to 150 miles along the center and northern portions, being a scope of country nearly three times as great as was settled during the first fifteen years. East of the line referred to there were 117,000 people settled in 1870, while to the west there was not to exceed 5,000, and these principally along the line of the U. P. R. R., and they were mostly employees of the railroad.

Another fact of great significance must be noted in passing if we would understand what it meant to take and hold Nebraska for Methodism during this trying period. While the number of missions requiring help increased from thirty-one in 1870, to eighty-seven in 1879, and while at the same time the capacity of the people to support their pastors had diminished by reason of the grasshopper scourge, the Missionary Society had not been able to respond to this vast increase in the demand with any increase in the appropriations, these being $5,050 for 1870 and $5,000 for 1879. So the average for each mission receiving help in 1870, aside from what was appropriated to the district for the presiding elder, was $125, while in 1879 it had dropped down to $43.

About the same time, 1878, Dr. Maxfield, in his report, makes the following significant comparison: "The district (North Nebraska) has at work this year fifteen preachers, exclusive of the presiding elder. Of these, eight were appointed by the bishop and seven are supplies. To aid in their support the Missionary Society appropriated $1,170. Another Church having eight men in the same field appropriates for their support over $3,000. That is, our appropriation, divided equally among

sixteen men, gives about $73 to each, while theirs, divided in the same way among eight men, gives about $400 each. When we consider that the great difficulty to meet and overcome in this frontier work is the support of the preachers, we can understand the great disadvantage under which we labor when we are compelled, as we are, to work side by side with these competing Churches, backed by so much larger outlay of money than our own."

But to understand the full significance of this comparison we must remember that all the $3,000 or more appropriated by our sister Church went to the eight pastors, while $400 of our $1,170 went to the presiding elder. Deducting this we have left $770 to be divided among fifteen pastors, reducing the average to a little over fifty dollars, a few dollars above the general average for 1879.

It is greatly to the credit of our sister denomination that she made such bountiful provision for the comfort of her missionaries in the home field. But is it not even more to the credit of Methodism that with one-eighth of the amount of missionary money for each pastor she could still find devoted and self-sacrificing preachers enough to man her work, and that they and their successors have done their work so well that the membership of the Methodist Church is nearly four times as great as that of this same sister denomination?

This feature of Methodism by which she is able to keep up the supply of workers under all circumstances has been alluded to before in a general way. To some of those who have been prominent as leaders in some of these sister denominations, who put special emphasis on the comfort of the home missionary, the fact has been inexplicable. One said to the writer: "I can't under-

stand how you can keep men in the field on such small salaries; we can't get our men to do it." Another asked me how many presiding elders we had in Nebraska, and when I told him fourteen, he asked if they all hustled round like I did. I told him I hoped they were all doing better work than I was. He then said: "That is where you beat us, in providing this thorough supervision of the work." While the first could think of no explanation, the second was only partially correct, though doubtless the presiding eldership has been of great value in mustering and inspiring and directing the forces. Any complete explanation will place first of all the genius and ideals of Methodism and the spirit of self-renunciation and entire devotement to Christ and his cause, and conviction of duty, with which every one who enters her ministry must be possessed. Without designing any invidious comparison, I venture to give quaint old Father Janney's putting of the case: "While some of the other Churches when they enter a field, put the emphasis on ministerial support, and say a preacher *must have* a fair salary, and after this is secured, the people may have the Gospel, Methodism approaches the same field, putting the emphasis on the needs of the people, saying the people must have the Gospel, whether the preacher has a comfortable support or not." While this putting of the case may not be quite just to some of the other denominations, some of which worked side by side with us, their ministers making many sacrifices, it certainly puts well the case of the Methodistic view of Church work and ministerial duty. These preachers must have had a passion for souls, and a profound, overmastering conviction of duty.

All this is referred to as showing the tremendous re-

sponsibility of the Church to conserve whatever there was of the religious life among this vast multitude of settlers, by hunting them up in the dugouts, organizing them into classes, circuits, districts, and Conferences, and supplying them with pastors. Some of the frontier districts when formed included vast regions of unorganized work, and sometimes less than half of the charges assigned were supplied with pastors from the Conference, leaving the work of finding men for the balance, and for the settlements not mentioned, or yet to be made, in the charges assigned him, to the presiding elder. Only men of the highest executive and organizing ability, with a spirit of self-sacrifice and devotion to the work, who would shrink from no hardship which the interests of Zion required, would meet the demand. They must somehow find the men to man this vast field, with little or nothing to offer in the way of an inducement, unless an opportunity for hard work on small pay in laying the foundations of the Church would be considered inducements. C. W. Wells, who entered the work as we have seen in 1871, and who was one of the most faithful and efficient pioneer preachers we have had, received from the people for the first seven years of his work less than an average of $175 a year. His experience could be matched by scores of others. Can these presiding elders find enough men to do this hard work on these hard terms.

This will be no easy task. When the Beatrice and Covington Districts were formed in 1871, and the Kearney District in 1873, more than half the charges on each of these districts were left to be supplied, and this was true of the Kearney District each year throughout A. G. White's administration. Where can they find the men?

Certainly they can not depend on the theological schools to turn out enough to supply this demand. Nor will they be able to secure the transfer of enough experienced men from other Conferences. In nothing has the Methodist Church showed its hard, sanctified, common sense in the administration of its work more than in the policy of getting the best material possible, and seizing on the best available talent to be had at the time, and by any and every means keep the work going, look after the scattered flocks, and get these organized into classes, and then get sinners converted. Or, reversing this order, have some itinerant or some local or superannuated preacher go into neighborhoods where there were no members, or not enough to effect an organization, hold a revival meeting, and in that way get enough to organize a class; and perhaps extend this process to a number of neighborhoods and soon have classes enough to form a circuit.

Methodism's readiness for this great emergency lay largely in the fact that in addition to her army of regulars, which consisted of the effective members of Conference, she had provided a great reserve force, consisting of her local preachers, supplemented in these times by the supernumerary and superannuated preachers. These may, as compared with the regulars, be called the militia, to be called into action on occasions when the regulars were not present in sufficient numbers, or not available. And the Church hesitated not to call out the militia when the battle was on, and the question at issue was whether Christ or Satan should have Nebraska. True, there were some in this militia that were not so well equipped by learning as might be wished, but they

had the root of the matter in them. Though destitute of the training of the schools, they showed that they had "been with Jesus and had learned of him," and understood by experience the great plan of salvation. And as American independence had been won principally by men who were ill clothed, fed, or equipped, according to the prevailing military standards of the day, but being true patriots and understanding the value of liberty, and being led by such men as Washington, achieved success in the establishment of the cause of freedom for which they contended, so these untrained and poorly equipped local preachers, who yet like Stephen, the deacon, being "full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people," and being skillfully led by such men as Davis, Maxfield, Lemon, White, Pritchard, Giddings, and Van Doozer, contributed greatly toward the winning of that great battle and saving Nebraska for Christ.

CHAPTER XIII.

THIRD PERIOD. (1870-1880.)

In the beginning of this period at the Conference held at Fremont, March 31, 1870, only twelve preachers answered to roll call, and as there was no note made of members coming in later, and no roll of the Conference members, it is somewhat difficult to ascertain the exact number, but there were probably about twenty-five. This number included such men as T. B. Lemon, W. B. Slaughter, C. W. Giddings, J. B. Maxfield, David Hart, A. L. Folden, Jacob Adriance, J. J. Roberts, Gilbert De La Matyr, G. S. Alexander, Martin Pritchard, H. T. Davis, A. G. White, Jesse L. Fort, and J. M. Adair, many of them intellectual giants, and capable and willing to do efficient service. Thirty-four received their appointments from Bishop Clark, and eight places were left to be supplied. There were 2,670 persons in full membership and 876 probationers. There were twenty-one churches, valued at $117,000, and fourteen parsonages valued at $15,000.

Will Methodism be equal to this great emergency, and with this little band of thirty-four members of Conference be able to keep pace with this rapidly advancing frontier? Surely it will be tested severely, but as events prove, it is equal to the occasion.

Providentially there were at the beginning of this vast movement of population four of the best presiding

elders Nebraska Methodism has ever had, whose four districts covered the ground of this advance. The Beatrice District was placed in charge of J. B. Maxfield in 1871, and included Gage, Jefferson, Saline, York, Thayer, Nuckolls, Franklin, and Harlan Counties, and the sparsely inhabited but unorganized territory extending to the west line of the State. The same year Bishop Ames placed H. T. Davis, who was on the Lincoln District, in charge of the new settlements along the Burlington and Missouri River Railroad, which was extending its line west from Lincoln to Kearney. A. G. White was already on the Omaha District and had jurisdiction over the entire length of the Union Pacific Railroad and up the Loup River. The Covington District was formed in 1871 and placed in charge of that natural-born pioneer preacher, S. P. Van Doozer. It extended along the north tiers of counties in the State, from the Missouri on the east, to the limits of settlement in the west, embracing about 10,000 square miles. As might be expected, these leaders of the past were equal to the demands of the situation.

Those were trying times for presiding elders, and for circuit riders who already had large circuits. Some Methodist settler, anxious that he and his few Methodist neighbors should be organized into a class and be supplied with preaching, would beseech the presiding elder to send them a preacher, or would visit the nearest circuit rider they could hear of and urge him to "come over and help." The presiding elder moved by this clamor, would sometimes exercise less care than he would otherwise have done, and under the pressure of an urgent demand be tempted to send them the first man he could

find, and who would sometimes turn out to be an ecclesiastical dead beat, and great harm would follow. Or the already overburdened circuit preacher would yield to the urgent appeal and launch out into unorganized settlements and add appointment after appointment to his charge, rendering it more difficult to do justice to the original appointments. When in the spring of 1871, the writer was assigned to Schuyler Circuit, it embraced all of Colfax and Butler Counties. He had to cross the Platte on a flatboat every alternate week to fill his three appointments already existing along the Platte Valley. But during that spring and summer all that table-land from the Platte Valley to the Blue, and west into Polk County and east into Saunders, was settled. The following incidents will show how the work expanded in those days: On one trip during the summer, while crossing the river, an elderly man, an entire stranger, approached me and asked if I was the preacher on that circuit. An affirmative answer brought an urgent request that I go over to a new settlement some twelve miles southwest, on the table-lands and look after the religious interests of some of his sons, with others, who, with their families, were located there. There was nothing to do but to promise, and in a few weeks what is now Rising Church was organized, the man making the request being old Father Rising, after whom the town was named. About the same time, at the close of one of my services at the Rosenbaum appointment in the Platte Valley, in Butler County, a fine, intelligent looking man approached me, introducing himself as a new settler, and asked me to make an appointment at his house. The result of this interview was that in a short time the David

City Church was organized in the unfinished home of Captain A. F. Coon, the man who had hunted up the itinerant preacher and made the request.

The problem of gathering up these scattered Methodist settlers and organizing them into classes and circuits proceeded along two lines, the spontaneous and the regular. There had come along with these very settlers many local preachers and some superannuated preachers, and some of the more zealous of these, seeing the need of immediate action, waited not for the coming of the presiding elder, but launched out into any unorganized territory and began work.

The regular line of work consisted on the part of the presiding elder largely in pushing out himself and holding meetings in new settlements and then finding some one to supply the work, perhaps some local or superannuated preacher. The first of these movements, in order to distinguish it from the usual method, is called spontaneous, rather than irregular. In one sense it is the regular duty of the local preacher thus to supplement the regular.

It will be interesting and instructive to trace some of these spontaneous movements that antedated the coming and exercise of authority on the part of even these vigilant presiding elders.

A typical case of this kind of work is related by Rev. David Fetz, a local preacher at that time, who had settled in the northern part of Webster County in July, 1873: "Brother Moses Mapes, a local preacher, and I commenced work in the north part of Webster and the south part of Adams Counties, extending our work into Franklin and Kearney Counties. Wherever we could

obtain a place to preach we soon had a class and Sunday-school organized. The Lord was with us in great power and numbers were converted and added to the Church. At Cloverton, in the north part of Webster County, a class was organized that year of over fifty members, taking in nearly all the inhabitants for eight or ten miles around. Also at Daily's ranch, on the Little Blue another was organized of equal numbers, where infidels and skeptics, and all classes, had been swept into the kingdom of our Christ. One infidel was converted as he lay on his bed at the midnight hour reading his Bible. Immediately he arose, went out into the darkness, and going from house to house and calling the people out to tell them what the Lord had done for his soul. At other points equal victories were obtained. No presiding elder had reached that part of the country as yet, and the Conference knew nothing of our work until the following year."

As early as 1869 that consecrated apostle, Rev. James Query, a local preacher, had preached the first sermon in Polk County, in (now) Governor J. H. Mickey's house, and organized the first class in Polk County, consisting of James Query and wife, J. H. Mickey and wife, Mrs. A. Roberts, Mrs. Jane Clark, and V. P. Davis and wife. The class was attached to the Seward County Circuit. This same James Query performed the first marriage ceremony ever solemnized in Polk County. In his report to the Conference of 1872, H. T. Davis, presiding elder, says of this zealous local preacher: "Brother James Query, a local preacher, organized this year a work on the Upper Blue, in Polk County, and reported to me 130 members, including probationers, two Sabbath-schools

with sixty scholars. Assisted by George and Joshua Worley (also local preachers) a most gracious revival of religion took place and some seventy-five souls were converted to God, including some of the most influential citizens of Polk County. They desire the Conference to send them a preacher." This is the cry that came up from many settlements at that time.

The mention of the Worleys brings to view two local preachers that wrought diligently and efficiently in laying the foundations of our Zion in the country contiguous to their homesteads, including portions of Lancaster, Saunders, Seward, Butler, and Polk Counties. The two older Worleys, George and Joshua, were constantly on the lookout for openings, and were constantly finding them, where they might hold a meeting and organize a class. Sometimes they were temporarily employed by the presiding elder, as supplies, but more frequently asserted their right to pre-empt any unclaimed territory not occupied by the regularly appointed itinerant, and there raise the standard of King Immanuel, and take possession for Christ and the Church.

At Norfolk, W. G. Beels and John Allberry, local preachers, held the fort in Madison County till the regularly appointed minister came, or like Charles G. Rouse, assumed the aggressive and pushed out into new settlements, held revival-meetings, and organized and laid the foundation ready for the itinerant when he came. Or A. C. Butler in Cedar and Dixon Counties, in the extreme north, who organized the first Sunday-school in the Morton neighborhood, near where Hartington now stands, and afterwards going along with W. H. Carter into some neglected neighborhoods west of Hartington,

held revival-meetings, resulting in the organization of the Oliver appointment on the Wausa Charge, with seventy members and a church.

Thus these zealous local preachers and devoted superannuates, who were willing, and capable of doing the work needed at that time, were gladly utilized by these wise presiding elders, and they actually did much of the work of organizing the Church, work that could not possibly have been done when it needed to be done, but for their help.

This will be a suitable place to speak more fully of the Worley family, a family that has played an important part in the history of Nebraska Methodism.

Besides these years of faithful and efficient service by these two brothers, George and Joshua Worley, both local preachers, it was the privilege of George Worley to give three sons to the Methodist ministry, who in both the home and foreign fields have wrought efficiently for many years. William McKendree Worley, the oldest of these, was born in Vermilion County, Illinois, December 23, 1839, father and grandfather being stanch Methodists. He was converted at the age of fourteen, and soon became class-leader and Sunday-school superintendent in his home Church.

On the 18th of April, 1861, he enlisted in Company C, Twelfth Illinois Infantry, for a term of three months; was mustered into the United States service May 2d, at Camp Yates, Springfield, Illinois, by Captain U. S. Grant. He afterwards re-enlisted in the 135th Illinois Infantry, and was finally mustered out of the service September 28, 1864.

Brother Worley removed to Nebraska in May, 1867.

He was licensed to preach by Rev. C. W. Giddings, presiding elder of Lincoln District. He served one year as supply and junior preacher on the North and West Blue Circuit, which embraced all of Butler, Polk, Hamilton, York, and Seward Counties, and part of Saline County. There were twenty-two appointments on the charge.

He was the first Methodist to preach in York County. The service was held at the home of Mr. Anderson, a few miles west of Beaver Crossing. Besides sixty-two dollars which he received from the missionary appropriation to that circuit, he received eleven dollars in money, five of which was paid by J. H. Mickey. In addition to this he received one pair of socks. There was but one school-house on the entire circuit, so of course the services had to be held in the private homes of the people at a time when these homes consisted of dugouts and sod houses, and rarely had more than one room.

What he regarded as the greatest misfortune that came to him during that year was the loss of his saddle-bags and their contents while swimming Plum Creek, fifteen miles north of Seward. The contents consisted of a pair of socks, a Bible, Discipline, Wesley's "Plain Account of Christian Perfection," and Fletcher's Appeal. This is doubtless a fair sample of an itinerant's library, and the swimming of the stream, not an uncommon experience in those days of bridgeless streams.

Brother Worley was received on trial in 1873, and has had success on all the many charges he has served during his long career. New churches have been organized at Roca and Bancroft, and at Covington, Schuyler, Seward Street, Omaha, and other points, old debts have

been paid and churches built at Alder Grove, Bancroft, Richland, and a new parsonage at Lyons.

There was some revival interest on every charge he served, and on some there were gracious revivals. At Albion a great revival occurred during Brother Worley's pastorate that brought into the Church such men as Dr. Lewis, C. G. Barns, and others, who proved to be a progressive element that has ever since carried the Church forward on lines of steady and healthy progress.

Brother Worley represented the North Nebraska Conference in the General Conference of 1888. In 1895 he was transferred to the Nebraska Conference and has been uniformly successful in the successive pastorates assigned him, and he is yet hale, hearty, and cheerful, after a third of a century in the Christian ministry. He was married to Miss Frances T. Worrell in 1874, and she has proved a faithful Methodist itinerant's wife through all these years.

Thomas, another one of the Rev. George Worley's "boys," was born in Vermilion County, Illinois, October 11, 1852, and converted in 1865. He was educated at the State University, and after two years at Garrett Biblical School, was received on trial in 1876. After several years of efficient service in Nebraska, he was sent as a missionary to Central China, where he remained a few years and returned to the work in Nebraska.

Thomas Worley has done excellent work on many of the successive important charges he has served, and is now pastor at Weeping Water, where the old stone church built by Andrew L. Folden thirty years before was enlarged and remodeled at a cost of some $7,000.

Jas. H. Worley, the third son given by George Wor-

ley to the ministry, was born May 17, 1854, and was also educated in the State University. At about the time James Worley was taking his course, there occurred the effort elsewhere referred to, to turn the institution over to infidel influence, and had so far succeeded that it became a hand to hand contest between St. Paul's Church and the infidel professors, who should have the boys and girls. Mrs. Roberts, Mrs. Hyde, Mrs. Peckham, and other elect ladies of the Church, found in James Worley one of the most efficient helpers, being their missionary to the students, carrying their invitations to attend socials at their homes and to come into their classes in the Sunday-school.

He was received on trial in the Nebraska Conference in 1880, and was sent as a missionary to China in 1882, to which field he has given twenty-two years. He was for seven years principal of the Theological Seminary at Foochow, and has been the rest of the time in evangelistic work. He was the delegate from Foochow Conference to the General Conference in 1900. He is now presiding elder of a district, and in a letter to the writer, joins with all the other missionaries in noting a marvelous change taking place in old China, presaging great events in the near future, which will accrue to the more rapid advance of missionary work.

It has been given to but few men to do more for the cause of Christ by their own personal work in the local ranks, and to give to the Church three ministers whose influence has been as great on both sides of the globe.

While these spontaneous activities of faithful local preachers were valued, and always recognized and incorporated in the system, they were the exception, and in

their nature temporary. These enterprising presiding elders were on the constant lookout for these new settlements and were kept posted in various ways as to the needs and possibilities of the work, and were not long in finding some one to supply the field.

Thus word came to Dr. Maxfield, who in 1871 had been placed in charge of Beatrice District, then a frontier district, that a man was needed on the Republican, and C. W. Wells was sent.

The appointment and work of Brother C. W. Wells on the frontier being a typical one, is well worthy of a somewhat detailed statement, which will best be told in his own language, as recorded in his very valuable and intensely interesting book, "Frontier Life," prefacing his own statement of the case by a few preliminary and explanatory facts. In 1871 Rev. C. W. Comstock had been appointed to the Republican Valley Circuit, but after a brief visit to the country he became discouraged and returned as far as Fairbury, to which Brother Wells had been appointed, saying in explanation that he did not like to stay in a country where he had to carry a revolver, accompanying the remark by an exhibition of such a weapon. But people were beginning to crowd into the Republican Valley and must be cared for. Dr. Maxfield wrote Brother Wells that there were Methodists at Red Cloud, and asked if he would go out and look after them, adding, "There is no use sending C., I want some one who has sand in his craw." Recognizing this essential quality in Brother Wells he asked him, and Brother Wells possessing the quality in rare degree, went, though at great sacrifice. It may be remarked in passing that while Brother Wells has put in many years of valuable

work, and is now an honored superannuated member of the Nebraska Conference, Comstock, after a few years of inefficient work, dropped out entirely and has long since been forgotten. The frontier service tended to sift the ranks of the itinerancy and usually all but those who had the requisite "sand in their craw" dropped out. Referring to this willingness of Brother Wells to go to this hard field, Dr. Maxfield says in his next report to Conference, "God's blessing rests upon men who shake hands with ease and comfort, bidding them farewell and taking their lives in their hands, thus go forth bearing the precious seed."

But we must let Brother Wells tell his own story of his experiences during his pastorate there, as recorded on pages 190 to 193:

"Now came the tug of war with real frontier work in the ministry. For the first months my time was principally spent in looking over the country for Christian people and for houses to preach in. Soon after reaching Red Cloud an appointment was made at Brother Penny's, about four miles southwest of town, and at Brother Knight's, some five miles from Red Cloud up the valley, and another one about eight miles southeast of town.

"At the Penny appointment preaching was in Brother Penny's house, which was a log building with a roof of 'shakes' split from the native oak-trees on his own place. Here I had a good preaching point during my entire pastorate on the charge. At Red Cloud I procured a vacant log building, which I occupied for a short time, then preached in Mr. Garber's store-room for a while; after this I moved into a dug-out in the south part of town, which shall be noticed further on. At the Knight

appointment I preached in Brother Knight's house, and, if I remember correctly, it was covered with poles and dirt, and had a floor of native soil. Here, as previously, we sang, prayed, preached, ate, and slept all in the same room, and had a glorious, good time. At the appointment southeast of Red Cloud we had preaching and Sunday-school in a dug-out in the bank of a creek, where we worshiped the Lord in the winter season, and in the summer we worshiped under the branches of two large oak-trees. Under these native trees I preached, held Sunday-school, and we made the woods and hills ring with our songs of praise and plain Gospel sermons. I often wonder if the echo of my voice is not still heard in that new country. The many happy hours I spent among those warm-hearted early settlers in dug-outs and sod houses will never be forgotten. They will be held in sweet remembrance as long as I live.

The house where I boarded was about as good as the country afforded at that time, and yet it was a very uncomfortable place in cold, stormy weather. Many times I have sat poring over my books while the snow sifted through the roof upon them, and I was compelled to throw something over my shoulders and sit in a stooping posture in order to keep my books from being soiled. Though the house was open to the cold, we could keep comfortably warm, for we were blessed with plenty of wood and a large fireplace. I say plenty of wood; there was plenty close by, but much of the time I carried it from the grove on my own shoulders. In cold weather, Brother Penny was usually on the road teaming, and left me to replenish the woodpile without a team.

"Another burden was imposed upon me. A good

brother who lived a mile from my boarding place was compelled to leave home and find work, that he might provide bread for his family. While he was away there came a heavy fall of snow. The weather grew exceedingly cold and the fuel he had provided for his family was entirely consumed. As there was no other man near, it fell to my lot to replenish this brother's wood-pile also, and keep his family from freezing. He had drawn up a lot of ash poles for fencing, which I converted into stove-wood, and, on his return he found his fencing had been burned to ashes. There is a vast difference between acting the part of a city pastor and preaching on a large circuit in the frontier work. While the city pastor is sitting in his cozy study at home, the frontier preacher is perusing his books in a cold room, with the family of children about him, or traveling through deep snow to meet his appointments, or to relieve the sick and destitute. Yet there is a glory in laying the foundation of our beloved Zion in a new country that many of our Eastern preachers know nothing of. I have no disposition to envy the comparatively easy lot of our Eastern brethren; but I do sympathize with them in their loss of the glory there is in laying the foundation Church in the new fields, upon which others may build.

"In all my travels on that large circuit at Red Cloud, through the snow and cold, piercing winds of winter, I neither had an under-garment nor an overcoat. Being born a backwoodsman, I did not mind such things as one who had been used to the comforts of life. On this charge I had some difficulty in finding houses to preach in; for when first going to the place there were no school-houses in all the country; so I preached in private houses, hop-

ing for the time when my congregation could have even a sod school-house to worship in. Even in the town of Red Cloud I was compelled to resort to a little dug-out on the outskirts of the village, where we held a series of meetings which resulted in great good for the Master's cause. Let the pastors of the present-day beautiful churches in Red Cloud rejoice that they are so comfortably situated, and remember that the first pastor and his little flock in that now flourishing town, preached, sang, and prayed in a small dug-out in the ground.

"On first coming to this country, I found Indians, buffaloes, deer, antelopes, turkeys, thousands of prairie-dogs, and a few white men with their families. What a change has taken place in that country in so short a time! Then it was new, wild, and desolate; now it is well settled, rich, and a fertile country, with school-houses and churches; and fine residences have taken the place of the dug-out, the sod-house, and the log-cabin. The first winter I spent there I killed twelve wild turkeys, two of which were shot from the window of my room. Besides these, Brother Penny killed some seven or eight. So you see the wild turkey took the place of yellow-legged chicken. Then, occasionally, some chanced to kill a deer or buffalo, which went far toward supplying the table with meat the entire year.

"During the winter we held a revival-meeting in our dug-out church, eight miles southeast of Red Cloud. Though worshiping under ground, there were many souls saved and made happy in the Lord, and there was a glorious awakening among the people of God. Truly the Lord is not confined to the large assemblies, the city-full, or the fine churches, but meets and blesses his peo-

ple in the dug-out, the sod house, and the log-cabin. O what a wonderful God is our God, who heareth the prayers of His people at all times and in all places!

"In the spring of 1872 I finished my first year's work in the Conference, and on the Red Cloud Circuit, and went to Conference to report my charge. Traveling from Red Cloud to the seat of Conference, a distance of a hundred and fifty miles or more, through mud, rain, and cold, I reported as follows: Full members, twenty-three; probationers, six; received on salary from the circuit, thirty-two dollars; from the Missionary Society, $150—making $182 for the year. The bishop returned me to the Red Cloud Circuit, where I spent another year of toil and hardship, worrying through the year about as I did the previous one. During the warm season I had a good and enjoyable time in traveling up and down the valley and across the prairie with my horse and buggy; but in the snow and severe winds of winter, being poorly clad, I suffered intensely from the cold. During this year a class was formed at Guide Rock, which was made a regular preaching point, though there were but few Methodists at the place or within reach of it. I now had five preaching points on the charge, which gave me abundance of work.

"In the summer of 1872 we held a camp-meeting southwest of Red Cloud, on what was called Penny Creek. Here we had a successful meeting, and received some fifteen into the Church on probation, and the presiding elder, J. B. Maxfield, baptized a number of converts in the Republican River—the first Methodists baptized in that river in Nebraska.

"During the week of our camp-meeting a heavy rain-

storm visited the camp, saturating the ground to such a degree that it was unfit for use; so the presiding elder and I, with a few of the brethren, went on a buffalo hunt. We hunted all day without seeing any game, and came home tired and hungry, as hunters usually do. But the elder and the brethren went out the second time with better results. After hunting a few hours in the morning, they came upon their game, wounded a large male buffalo and chased him for several miles. He ran until he could or would go no farther, and then seemed determined to defend himself. Halting not far from where two young men were in camp, he unmistakably showed signs of fight. On seeing that he would go no farther, one of the young men, taking his gun, walked out toward him. As he was approaching the beast one of our men called to him not to go too close or he might be hurt. Paying no attention to the warning, he went on, swearing that he would kill the animal. When within a few rods of the enraged beast, he presented his gun for firing; but the buffalo made a lunge for him, caught and crushed him to the ground, and threw him five or six feet into the air. As he came to the ground the buffalo prepared for another attack, when one of our men shot the beast through the heart, killing him instantly. The young man was taken to his camp and died there. Our men dressed the buffalo and returned to the camp-ground with enough beef to supply every person there for more than a week. Our camp-meeting closed with the good results already mentioned, and every one went home greatly benefited by having attended. The presiding elder, J. B. Maxfield, and a family by the name of Hurlburt came to this camp-meeting from Fairbury, nearly eighty miles distant, in a

covered wagon. Thus the reader can see something of the presiding elder's work and what he passed through in the early days of Methodism in this new country. Brother Maxfield's district extended from somewhere east of Beatrice as far west as the Nebraska line, a distance of more than three hundred miles, though he was not required to go so far west; for as yet much of the country was unsettled."

What Brother Wells and George W. Hummel were doing in the Republican Valley, others of like spirit were doing all along the line. About this time the tide of immigration was pouring into all the country west of the Big Blue, and in 1871 Bishop Ames placed the territory contiguous to the B. & M. R. R., which was being built from Lincoln to Kearney, in the care of H. T. Davis, then presiding elder of the Lincoln District. He procured the services of Rev. G. W. Gue, a transfer from Central Illinois Conference, to organize the work in Fillmore County. Brother Gue was a man of fine culture and high, scholarly attainments. He went to work with a will, visiting the people in their sod houses, and organizing them into classes, and soon formed a circuit. Perhaps no part of Nebraska has been settled with people of a higher grade of intelligence than those that speedily occupied the table-lands extending west of the Big Blue to Adams and Hamilton Counties. They were ambitious and enterprising and in nine months after the first settlement of Fairmont, Brother Gue had a church well under way. The next year Brother Gue was appointed to First Church, Omaha, and seemed equally at home in either charge.

In Clay County, Newman Brass was doing the same

kind of work, hunting up the Methodists that were coming in and organizing them. Others were doing the same in York, Butler, and Polk Counties.

YORK.

If we are to judge of the value of the work accomplished in those early days by the subsequent growth of the Church, no more important work was done in 1871, than when the York Church was organized. Of the organization of this important charge, H. T. Davis gives this interesting account: "The first Methodist class was organized at the house of David Baker in the spring of 1871, and was composed of the following persons: David Baker, Elvira Baker, J. H. Bell, Thomas Bassett, L. D. Brakeman, Ella Brakeman, Sarah N. Moore, Thomas Myres, John Murphy, Mary Murphy, S. W. Pettis, and Mrs. Shackelford. Brother Baker was the leader. At Brother Baker's house the class was regularly held; and here the traveling preacher always found a royal welcome. The home of Brother and Sister Baker was always open to newcomers, and Father and Mother Baker were household names in every settler's cabin in York County for many years. In 1872 the writer had the privilege of sharing their hospitality, and after remaining over night with the kind family, in the morning Brother Baker ferried me over Beaver Creek in a sorghum-pan. The stream was high and could not be forded, and there was no bridge, so the only way of crossing was in this unique boat."

But before the organization referred to by Dr. Davis W. E. Morgan, a graduate of Garrett Biblical Institute had preached in Father Baker's sod house on the 14th c

May. He afterwards served as pastor for several years. Doubtless the location of our Conference school at York in 1879 tended to strengthen our Church, attracting as it did many Methodist families. During the existence of the school, under the pastorates of W. S. Blackburn, George A. Smith, H. T. Davis, Duke Slavens, and W. K. Beans, the membership increased from 140 to 568.

W. S. Blackburn was pastor at York at the time the school was located there, and it was largely through his influence that this action was taken. Of course, before this action, York had the reputation of being one of the most moral communities in the State. Up to that time, and ever since, they had kept the saloon out, and this had much weight in determining the Conference to locate at York. Though soon after the location of Wesleyan at Lincoln, the York College ceased to be, the Methodist Church had already acquired such strength that this fact did not check its growth, but it kept on growing under the successive pastorates of Hilton, Crosthwaite, and Stewart, until the present pastor, in his sixth year of a successful pastorate, finds himself the pastor of the third largest Methodist Episcopal Church in Nebraska, with nearly 800 members. The two which excel it numerically are St. Paul's Church, Lincoln, and University Place.

It would be interesting if space permitted to give the life history of each of the men who have wrought in the building up of so strong and influential a Church as that at York. But this is impossible, and we must be content with the mere mention of the names, except in a few cases of long service to the Church in Nebraska. Of Davis and Crosthwaite mention has been made on other pages.

W. S. Blackburn was born in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, September 11, 1830. He first became conscious of the love of God in his heart when eight years of age, but childhood conversion received less recognition then, and he was not encouraged in his religious life and fell into spiritual darkness. This continued until he was fifteen years of age, when he was clearly converted, and has since that day to this, "witnessed a good confession."

After spending some time at Allegheny College he was, at the age of nineteen, without solicitation on his part, licensed to exhort by his Quarterly Conference, and was at once assigned work in a destitute neighborhood and soon had, as seals to his ministry, twenty souls converted. He was soon licensed to preach, and on the 18th of June, 1851, he was admitted on trial in the Pittsburg Conference, and began a successful ministerial career of over half a century.

In June, 1854, Eliza Jane Wakefield, the granddaughter of a pioneer Methodist minister, became his life companion, and from that day to this she has devoted her life to the work required of a minister's wife, with an enthusiasm and efficiency which has largely contributed to the successes which mark her husband's ministerial career.

Pronounced unfit for service in the Union army in 1861 as a common soldier, he later waived an appointment as chaplain in favor of his junior colleague. Soon thereafter he took work with the Christian Commission and spent a term in that important auxiliary service, ministering to the physical wants of the sick and dying soldiers, pointing them to the Savior and seeing many a brave boy die with the love of the Redeemer quickening

his departing soul and banishing the sting of death and the terror of the grave.

For sixteen years Mr. Blackburn was a member of the Pittsburg Conference, and on every charge his passion for soul saving was rewarded with conversions. In the fall of 1867 a transfer was taken to the Nebraska Conference, and for the next twenty-seven years this pioneer pastor colabored with those grand old evangelists, Lemon, Pritchard, Slaughter, Giddings, Burch, Davis, Maxfield, and others, serving the Church in pastorates at Brownville, Rulo, Salem, Athens, London, Auburn, Plattsmouth, and York, in the original Nebraska Conference, and in West Nebraska Conference, at Axtell, Benkleman, Culbertson, Gering, and Republican.

Always frail in body, he believed a change of climate and rest would benefit him. He went to California and spent a couple of years, during which time he served San Miguel. Finding himself renewed in strength he returned to Nebraska, and at Republican City, in West Nebraska, in the State to which he had given over twenty-five of his best years in a faithful, efficient service, he fittingly rounds out his half century in the Christian ministry by a pastorate attended by old-time revival power and the conversion of souls. He returned to California, and he and his saintly wife are spending a happy, peaceful old age, serenely waiting the summons that shall call them up higher. In closing a letter to his son, T. W. Blackburn, a prominent lawyer of Omaha, he says:

"With a heart glowing with gratitude to the Infinite Father, that He has given me so long a life of service in the ministry and that He has crowned my more than threescore and ten years with His loving kindness, strong

in the faith that came to me in childhood, happy in the memories of half a century in the itinerancy, and confident that God will welcome me home in His own good time, I here expect to spend the remnant of my days and from this city at His call to remove to the city not made with hands, whose builder and maker is God."

Another strong man who wrought in the rearing of the goodly structure of York Methodism, was J. W. Stewart, during whose pastorate the Church passed through a severe crisis in the loss by fire of the beautiful structure that had been erected during the pastorate of H. T. Davis. Of this great calamity the local historian, Mrs. Sarah N. Moore, gives this pathetic description: "One calm, beautiful night in October, the 16th, 1895, while prayer-meeting was in session in the lecture-room, fire was steadily making its way through the roof of the building, and by the time it was discovered it was too late to save the building, and while members and friends stood by and watched with tears running down their cheeks and exclamations of sorrow and regret coming from their lips, our beautiful church home was burned to the ground. We were bereft indeed, for was it not the second year of the drouth, and how could we ever rebuild? It was deemed an impossibility.

"Our sister congregations offered to share their church homes with us, but our membership was large, and it was thought best to secure a room, though it might be small and inconvenient, where we might hold regular services without interfering with the rights of others. As in the early days, there was no room suitable for a place of worship. But the Sunday after the fire found the congregation assembled in an empty store room on the

south side of the square, fitted up with a pulpit, a few pews, and the organ, which had been saved from the fire, and chairs sufficient for the seating capacity. We had a stirring sermon from the pastor, Brother Stewart, and at the close an appeal for money to rebuild the church, and in an incredible short time $6,000 had been subscribed, and it was settled that the Methodist Episcopal Church of York would not be homeless for a very long time."

Thus John W. Stewart successfully led the Church of York through this fiery trial at a time when the financial conditions throughout the entire country were depressed, and a severe drouth in Nebraska had intensified these unfavorable conditions to such an extent as to make the building of such a church as York needed to seem to the people an impossibility. But this incident is characteristic of the man and of his entire career.

He entered the ministry forty-six years ago, in 1858, in the Central Illinois Conference, but when the war broke out he enlisted in the service of his country, holding the rank of major. After discharging his duty to his country, he resumed his place in the ministry, and in 1874 was transferred to the Nebraska Conference.

George A. Smith became a member of the Wisconsin Conference in 1858, and gave over twenty years to the ministry in that Conference before coming to Nebraska in 1880. He stood high in a Conference of such men as W. G. Miller, Coleman, George C. Haddock, the martyr, and others. Since coming to Nebraska he has served the prosperous and important charges of York and Fairmont. But recognizing his superior ability as a preacher, and his sound judgment, the Church soon called him to

the presiding eldership of the Lincoln District, and then to the Nebraska City District.

A sad misunderstanding of the situation in relation to our University matters that were at that time very complicated, led Bishop Warren to remove him from the latter district before his six years expired. The bishop was manly enough to afterward acknowledge his mistake and the wrong he had done to one of God's purest ministers. In 1892 he asked and received a superannuated relation, and has since lived in University Place. But he has not been idle during these years of his retirement, but often supplies the pulpit for his pastor, and always to the delight and profit of his hearers. Though past seventy, his sermons are still delivered with much force, and contain many passages of rare beauty and originality, reminding us of the days when he was a great power in the pulpit and the counsels of the Church.

He has also spent much of this quiet evening of his life in literary work, and has written and published a volume of poems, "Evening Bells," in which the sweetness of his own inner life finds tender expression, and other lives are being enriched. Though afflicted with partial deafness, he is happily spending his declining years along with his devoted wife and accomplished daughter, Mamie, a teacher in the music department of Nebraska Wesleyan.

About the same time that George A. Smith came to Nebraska, another of Wisconsin's strong men came, in the person of Dr. W. G. Miller, being transferred to the Nebraska Conference in 1879. Beginning his ministry in 1844, it was his privilege to give a half century in this blessed work, fifteen of which were given to Ne-

braska. Death closed his long and useful career in 1893, and his brethren place on record the following brief summary of his life and work, and also these fitting words of appreciation of his worth:

"Wesson Gage Miller was born in Otsego County, New York, February 8, 1822, and died in University Place, Nebraska, December 20, 1893. His youth was spent in New York and in the summer of 1844 he settled in Waupun, Wisconsin, and went into business. He soon dropped secular pursuits and entered the ministry. His first circuit, Waupun, had twenty-two appointments requiring two services daily to reach all the points in two weeks. His next appointment was Watertown, where he performed the double duty of pastor and teacher. His third appointment was Waukesha, and his fourth Grand Avenue, Milwaukee. At the age of twenty-eight he was appointed presiding elder of Fond du Lac District and served for four years. He then served a pastorate of two years each at Racine and Janesville, after which he served Milwaukee District four years and pastor in Milwaukee three years. He was again appointed to Fond du Lac and Ripon and again, in 1872, to Milwaukee. April 26, 1874, during the delivery of a sermon, he was taken violently ill with a serious nervous prostration which caused him to retire for two and one-half years. On his recovery he was again appointed to Milwaukee, and in 1879 Bishop Harris transferred him to the Nebraska Conference and appointed him presiding elder of Omaha District, which he served two years, when the Conference was divided and he was appointed to York District for four years, and finally to the Lincoln District for six years, when he retired from the active work of the min-

istry, but continued to render what service he could to the University of whose Board of Trustees he was the president. All through his busy life he rendered much valuable service to the Church besides that assigned him by the Conference, especially in connection with the work of Christian education and the dedication of churches. Dr. Miller was an able preacher, a faithful pastor, a wise administrator and a warm friend to whom none need ever come in vain. He attended the Conference last September at Beatrice and made a touching address which all felt were farewell words. His last weeks he patiently waited for the summons to call him home. His work abides to bless the world. His memory is precious; may his mantle fall upon us who remain."

CHAPTER XIV.

THIRD PERIOD. (1870-1880.)

If we turn our eyes to the north part of the State we find the same process going on, though the number of immigrants is not so great. As early as 1868 the rich Logan Valley began to be settled as far north as the Omaha Indian Reservation. The first Methodist preacher to go as far as Lyons was Jesse W. Perkins, then a local preacher, who organized the Church at that point in November, 1870. The first members were: Joel S. Yeaton, Susan Yeaton, John Armstrong, Roseanne Armstrong, Adam Hetzler, Adelia Hetzler, Charles Shaw, Theresa Shaw, Albert and Hattie Thomas. Brother Perkins also organized the class at Alder Grove in southeast part of Burt County.

North of the Omaha Indian Reservation, at what at first was called Omadi, and afterwards Dakota City, an appointment had been maintained from 1856 up to 1867 and then drops out, to reappear in 1870, with that man of consecrated push, courage, and tact, S. P. Van Doozer, as pastor, whose fiery missionary zeal reaches up the Missouri River twenty miles and takes in Ponca, besides other points in the surrounding country, and according to the report of his presiding elder, A. G. White, was rewarded with an increase of 500 per cent in the membership, and according to the list of appointments the succeeding year, was himself justly rewarded by being

placed in charge of the Covington District. As might be expected the event proved the selection to be wise, his tireless energy, resourceful tact, and warm-hearted sympathy for preachers and people made him the man for the time and peculiar needs of the situation. There being no railroads, all his quarterly-meetings must be reached by private conveyance, involving sometimes travel of hundreds of miles and weeks of absence from home. He is verily another of those heroic spirits to whom will fitly apply the words by which as we have seen, Dr. Maxfield described C. W. Wells, being one of the men who "shake hands with ease and comfort, bidding them farewell, and taking their lives in their hands, go forth bearing the precious seed."

These high qualities were destined to be frequently called into action and subjected to the severest tests during his term of service. He will find but one organized charge as far west as Cedar County. Old St. James Class had been formed by an elderly preacher named Brown, as early as 1868, and had as one of the charter members Mrs. O. D. Smith, of precious memory. But about this time settlers began pouring into the southern parts of Dixon and Cedar Counties, penetrating as far as Wayne, Knox, Pierce, Madison, Boone, and Antelope Counties, all embraced in the Covington District. All these must be cared for and organized and it will tax even S. P. Van Doozer to keep up with the rapidly advancing tide.

Of some of S. P. Van Doozer's experiences on this district, his devoted wife writes me as follows:

"For four years and a half Mr. Van Doozer seemed like a stranger to his family, being gone nearly all of

the time, often being absent seven weeks on one trip. So much of a stranger was he that his first baby boy refused to notice him, and we always had trouble in the family when the papa came home.

"I am sure only God and Mr. Van Doozer knew the hardships of that new unorganized district during those years. Quarterly-meetings were held in sod schoolhouses, dug-outs, on the prairies in tents, or under a clump of cottonwood trees. He could always find a place to hold quarterly-meeting, 'Nothing daunting or making afraid.' On one of these long trips in the cool fall, he swam the Elkhorn River seven times to get his team and buggy with its contents over. The quarterly-meeting was held as per appointment and a grand spiritual feast was enjoyed. After giving me the details, he said, 'I brought home the quarterly collection to you.' 'How kind of you!' Drawing it from his pocket he handed me two copper pennies. 'Poor pay, do n't you think,' said I. 'No,' he replied, 'I held the quarterly-meeting in a poorly kept dug-out, all for Jesus' sake. He was with us in fullness of power. I was well paid.'"

The work on the district progressed, as each Conference report gave proof. I question if any Methodist Episcopal minister had as great a variety of experience. He was obliged to cross the Indian Reservation going over his district. A good story is remembered by those people of a horse trade he made with an Indian, in which the Indian got the best of the preacher.

After four years of aggressive leadership, S. P. Van Doozer retires from the North Nebraska District, and in his report for 1875 makes this summary of results: "When the district was formed, four years ago last

spring, there were nine charges, now there are seventeen, including one consolidation. Then there were two churches, one at Covington, valued at $2,000, and one at Decatur, valued at $1,500 ($3,500), which is too high by $1,000; now there are eight churches, whose probable value is $12,000. Then there was one parsonage valued at $600; now there are eight parsonages, whose probable value is not less than $3,000, making an increase of six churches and six parsonages, with an aggregate value of some $15,000, or an increase of about $12,000, and an increase of membership of at least 200 per cent. And while we feel thankful for the prosperity that has attended the district in its first four years of struggle, I am sorry that more has not been done. But I feel safe in saying that had it not been for providential calamities, much more would have been accomplished. In quitting this field of labor, I can not dismiss from my mind all feelings of solicitude and anxiety for its future welfare, and yet I cheerfully step aside and give place to some more worthy and efficient person as successor, praying the Divine blessing to rest upon him and crown his labors with abundant success, for Jesus' sake."

J. B. Maxfield is assigned to the North Nebraska District in 1875, having completed his full four years on the Beatrice District. It is still a frontier field, though some of the appointments are among the oldest in the Conference. The population is rapidly finding its way up the Logan, Elkhorn, and Niobrara Valleys, and on the fertile table-lands, the settlements extending as far west as Holt County. Of this district, the work of the year, and prospects, Dr. Maxfield gives this description in his first report: "The year now closing is my first on the North

Nebraska District. My predecessor, in his various reports, has conveyed to this Conference and to the public sufficient intelligence of its geographical contour, and natural resources. It comprises much the largest scope of actually inhabited territory of any district in the Conference. Its circuits are in consequence very large, each comprising many appointments; many of them remote from each other. This necessarily involves a great amount of travel in working each circuit, demanding large industry and faithfulness of every preacher in charge. Early in the year an unusual spirit of religious concern was observable almost everywhere upon the district. From very small beginnings, widespread revivals were the results. These continued during the entire winter, and in some places far into the spring and summer. A solid and considerable increase has thus ensued, both of numbers and, I am convinced, of personal piety.

"Looking upon the history of this centennial year, there are abundant reasons to be discovered for gratitude to Almighty God for the gracious mercies He has bestowed upon us. Our financial concerns have suffered in common with the business depression prevalent everywhere. Prices have been very small and money hard to obtain. Added to this general condition of monetary stringency, is the harm wrought by those periodical visitants, the grasshoppers, which have scourged this area of territory, comprised in the district I represent, once more. In the western and northern parts thereof, the harm done was much more severe than in the eastern portion. Yet there is not in my knowledge a single acre anywhere that entirely escaped, and in many instances the corn was entirely destroyed. The crops of small grains were meager,

and the farmers' hopes were builded upon an abundant corn crop; hopes that never were to be realized. An inevitable consequence is the poverty of our preachers, and a large deficiency arising from unpaid salaries. I do not recall more than one instance in which the entire salary has been paid. When we remember how small the salaries are, and then deduct therefrom at least one-third for deficiencies, we may then understand how many are the privations to be endured by the Methodist itinerants in the frontiers of Nebraska."

It is to be greatly regretted from the standpoint of the historian, that for some reason the secretaries did not print the reports of the presiding elders for several years. This involves the final reports on both the Beatrice and North Nebraska Districts, which have special value, as usually containing a résumé of the four years' work on their districts.

While we are deprived of this valuable source of information, we know in other ways that Dr. Maxfield successfully led the forces during the following four years, and the district, while not expanding territorially, continues to develop along all lines of Church work.

In 1871, George H. Wehn was admitted on trial and appointed to Madison Charge, which was, with the exception of a small class at Union Creek, an unorganized work, extending to the west as far as an enthusiastic young circuit rider, such as Brother Wehn was, would go in search of the scattered members of the Methodist fold. In a letter from Mrs. C. D. Trask, formerly of Oakdale, and one of the oldest settlers, she speaks thus of the beginning of religious work at that place: "Prior to any organization, Rev. George H. Wehn traveled as

far west as Frenchtown (near where Clearwater now is), preaching at some points along his line of travel, visiting from house to house and doing much good among the settlers. He organized the Oakdale class in the spring of 1872 at the residence of J. H. Snyder, the first members being A. M. Salnave, Hester A. Salnave, Wm. P. Clark, Mary E. Clark, Laura E. Snyder, Jacob Holbrook, Jesse T. Bennett, and Helen L. Bennett." In speaking of Brother Wehn, Mrs. Trask further says that "he possessed a good education, was a fair preacher, and diligent in labor."

Of Brother Wehn's circuit, and the work he did during that year, his presiding elder, S. P. Van Doozer, says: "Madison is a new work, and lies in the extreme western part of the district, embracing all of Madison and Antelope Counties, and a part of Boone County. One year ago Rev. George H. Wehn was appointed to this newly organized mission. When he entered upon his work he found a class of four or five members formed on Union Creek. From this small beginning he has gone on heroically, ascending the Elkhorn River and its tributaries, doing the work of an evangelist, and now reports five classes, and a membership, including probationers, of more than one hundred souls." During the year a camp-meeting was held, at which there were forty accessions to the Church. He significantly adds that the mission had assumed such proportions "that necessity will dictate a division for the ensuing year."

There appeared upon the scene in 1872 a sturdy Englishman, Jabez Charles. He was born in England, September 6, 1836, converted at the age of fifteen, and licensed to preach in the Primitive Methodist Church in

1864. In March, 1857, he was married to Miss Elizabeth Powles, and in June, 1868 they came to America, and he became a local preacher on the Charters Circuit, Pittsburg Conference, of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In March, 1872, he was recommended to the Pittsburg Annual Conference for admission on trial. But thinking he ought to avail himself of the opportunities offered in the great West to secure a homestead, he did not join the Pittsburg Conference, but came to Omaha, Nebraska, not intending to preach, but to make a home for himself and family. However, he preached once in a grove of scrub oaks just south of the Union Pacific depot, sometime during that summer, and soon a letter passed to that alert presiding elder, S. P. Van Doozer, who was on the lookout for good men to supply some unoccupied fields, informing him that in Omaha there was an English local preacher who would probably fill the bill. It was not long before Brother Charles received a letter from Van Doozer requesting him to meet him, which he did. The result of this meeting meant much for Nebraska Methodism, for he was at once requested to take charge of the work in Madison County. After informing him fully of the character and condition of the people, living in their sod houses; their poverty, intensified at that time by the grasshoppers; that there were no churches, and in many cases no school-houses even; no railroads through the country and no bridges over the streams, the presiding elder asked him how he liked it? Brother Charles answered, "I have learned to adapt myself to circumstances." The presiding elder said, "You will do," and at once employed him as a supply. On the 13th of September, 1872, Jabez Charles reached his

large and hard field of labor and began that self-sacrificing career of faithful and efficient toil and great usefulness, which continued without a break until the Conference of 1902, when at the age of sixty-six, worn out by thirty years of incessant toil on large circuits with small salaries, he requested, and was granted, a superannuated relation.

The history of the North Nebraska Conference would be very incomplete if what Jabez Charles has done for the Master were left out. Of that portion of it relating to the development of our work in Madison, Boone, and Antelope Counties, it was he, doubtless, above all others, who laid the foundations of our Zion during the first five years of his ministry in Nebraska, during which time he remained in the local ranks and was contented to serve as a supply under the presiding elder. The story of his work and experiences during these five years is so well told in a communication from him to the writer, that I can do no better than to quote his own words:

"On the 13th of September, with a letter of authority, I found myself in Madison County, Nebraska, as preacher in charge of the Madison Circuit. I found six preaching places; namely, Madison, with no class and no church; Union Creek, with J. T. Trine as leader and local preacher; Battle Creek, three miles up the creek from the present town of Battle Creek, with no class at this place; Fairview (Clarion Post-office), Brother Reigle, a local preacher and a good Methodist, and a class led by Brother E. Heath. At Buffalo Creek was the best appointment in every sense of the word. There we had a strong class, with good Father George Rouse as leader; we had two local preachers, Brothers J. T. Morris and R. J.

Harvey, and after a while two exhorters, Brother Shafer and Charles Rouse. (Ever since that time Brother Rouse has held a local preacher's license.) At Buffalo Creek we worshiped in a sod school-house, earth floor and sod roof, and yet what glorious times we enjoyed! After preaching in that old dug-out I heard sixty persons tell their experiences. I have known the men to put their spring seats around the door on the outside when there was snow on the ground because they could not get inside. This place is now known as Meadow Grove. Marietta was a preaching place, with a class, J. Alberry leader and local preacher. There were a number of other places at which we preached. The Best appointment was five miles west of Norfolk; Solters, twelve miles west of Norfolk; Deer Creek, Dry Creek, and St. Clair Creek. At this place we held a very good revival-meeting in 1873 and 1874. Brother C. Rouse was leader. This place was five and one-half miles southeast of Oakdale. I forded the Elkhorn River at different points all the way from Westpoint to Oakdale. Once I crossed in a molasses pan. I have taken off all my clothing and waded the stream, in order to get from one preaching place to the other. Those were the grasshopper times, when frozen squash was a luxury. Dry Creek Circuit was formed in 1873, taking in the northwest part of the county. In the fall of 1874 I left ninety-three full members on the circuit. In the fall of 1874 I was sent to the Albion Circuit, including the entire county of Boone. I found four preaching places. At Albion we had no town and no church. True there was one store, a school-house, and a court-house, and John Ayers's shanty, but no dwelling-house. Rev. S. P. Bollman, a local preacher,

lived in his homestead and preached all he could while holding various county offices. W. T. Nelson was our class-leader. At Boone we worshiped in a sod school-house, R. W. King was leader. At St. Edwards we had not even a school-house, but worshiped in Joel Berrey's sod dwelling-house. J. Berrey was our class-leader and W. J. Thompson was postmaster and the most prominent member at this place. We held a revival-meeting in a blizzard, with thirteen conversions.

"Twenty miles from Albion was Dayton, on the Cedar River. Brother James Robinson kept the post-office, Brother Broadbent was leader. This place is now called Cedar Rapids. At School-house No. 15 we held revival meetings, early in 1875, and formed a class of thirteen members, of which W. Deupoe, H. Guiles, and J. Moore were members. This place is now called Pinical Hill. At the first quarterly-meeting, when the question was asked, 'How much will you raise for the support of the minister this year?' Brother R. W. King said, 'We can not promise anything. If the grasshoppers take our crops, we can not pay anything.' But for 1875 I received $203.45; for 1876 I received $229.59. There was an increase of sixty-two full members and seven probationers. At our Conference held at Lincoln in 1875 I was ordained a local deacon by Bishop Haven. In the fall of 1876 I was sent back to the Madison Circuit a second time. On this work I found six appointments; namely, Madison, Union Creek, Fairview, Kalamazoo, Newmans Grove, and Tracy Creek. There was no church on this circuit. But in the summer of 1877 we commenced our Church enterprise at Madison. The first load of lumber for the new church came from Co-

lumbus, thirty-five miles away. The night before we started to Conference, which was held in Eighteenth Street, Omaha, October 11, 1877, Bishop Bowman presiding. At this Conference I was admitted on trial in the Nebraska Annual Conference, and was sent back to Madison for the second year. We continued work on our church all through the winter and in the summer we held a ministerial Conference in the new church, closing with a camp-meeting in Severens's grove, at which were present Rev. J. B. Maxfield, D. Marquette, J. B. Leedom, A. Hodgetts, and others. A good time was enjoyed.

"I received $175, and had an increase in membership of twenty-three. For the year 1878 I received $210.42, and had an increase in membership of four. Of this amount Madison paid $80 and I gave them on subscription $80 to the church. There went into the building of that church two yoke of oxen, one cow, and four pigs. My boy worked for the oxen and cow."

Another stalwart worker in the local ranks entered the field in Antelope and Madison Counties in the later seventies in the person of Charles G. Rouse, who was born in Dupage County Illinois, September 17, 1836; came to Nebraska in 1870, and received license to preach under Jabez Charles's pastorate in 1873, and has since, though remaining in the local ranks, assisted pastors and preached, as a supply, for twenty-five years, as regularly and efficiently as if he had been a member of the Conference. He would doubtless have been admitted into the Conference had he entered the work earlier in life. At the time his name was presented he was past forty and had a large family, and objection being made on

that score alone, he was not admitted, whereby a great mistake was made and injustice wrought, as his subsequent career of great usefulness makes clear. His record compares favorably with that of the average member of Conference. Brother Rouse is a man of fine physique, excellent voice, a good singer and a good preacher, and withal is "full of faith and the Holy Ghost." Great revivals have attended his ministry from the first. A goodly number of churches and parsonages have been built under his guidance and inspiration. Indeed, it would be difficult to find a charge which he has served that has not been strengthened in some way by this faithful man of God. He has served some important charges on the Neligh and other districts, among them may be mentioned Plainview, Osmond, Pierce, Creighton, Meadow Grove and Tilden, and Newman Grove and Emerick.

He began his work on the latter charge which was in the neighborhood of his homestead at St. Clair Valley, God blessing his ministry with a wonderful revival.

Brother Rouse has been twice married, first to Miss Lydia Motter, September 10, 1857, who after thirty years, during which she was a faithful wife and devoted mother of her children, she passed to her reward September, 1887. He was married the second time to Mrs. Amanda Grantham, February 11, 1897, who has since been a true companion in his toils and victories.

His patriotism was evidenced by three years' service in the army. He enlisted in Company B, Thirty-third Regiment, Wisconsin Infantry, August 14, 1862, and was honorably discharged August 9, 1865, at Vicksburg.

OMAHA.

In tracing the history of Omaha through the last period, we left it in the hands of Gilbert De La Matyr, who was leading the Church to large and more prosperous conditions. Samuel Burns, that genius in Sunday-school work, was at the head of that department and had already brought it up to 540, as compared with 240 Church members. Everything seems to promise well for the future, and in 1872 the presiding elder, A. G. White, puts the situation as follows:

"Dr. De La Matyr has fully sustained the prestige of the pulpit, and closed up his third year greatly beloved by the friends of the Church, and respected by the whole community. The Sabbath-school seems each session to be in the very zenith of its excellence. The officers and teachers present a rare example of promptness and adaptability and faithfulness in their work. Whatever money can purchase—judicious management and faithful labor can accomplish, are here applied to make Sabbath-school instruction attractive and successful."

G. W. Gue, whom we have seen cheerfully doing pioneer service among the new settlers in Fillmore County the year before, succeeds Dr. De La Matyr, and puts in a year of efficient service, when he is compelled to temporarily quit the active ministry and accept a lucrative secular position to make up a heavy financial loss caused by becoming surety for a friend.

The new factor of progress above referred to had been introduced into the Sunday-school work by the election of Samuel Burns as superintendent in 1869. That he was a rare genius in this kind of work is manifest

from the fact that the school, according to reports made to the Quarterly Conference, increased from 319 in 1870, including thirty-seven teachers, with no conversions reported, to 702 in 1872, including thirty-five teachers, with thirty conversions reported. The full significance of this phenomenal growth, will be better appreciated when we consider that the entire membership of the Church had not materially increased during that period, being 225. Indeed, the Minutes for 1873 show only 150 members, but this is probably an error. But when we recall the fact that the number in Sunday-school rarely exceeds the number of the Church membership, it will appear that this growth is almost unprecedented in the history of the Church. And that good was being done is evident from the thirty conversions reported in 1872.

With such a splendid record as this we can almost pardon a man if he becomes a little vain and even arrogant, and insists on running that department himself, assuming that results had proved him thoroughly competent to do so, and it would be sound policy for the Church to be patient with a man who could bring this important department up to such a high state of efficiency, and make it such a great power for good in the community as it certainly was. For the sake of the cause they could well afford to let him think the Sunday-school was the biggest thing about the Church, as it literally was, numerically, at least, and they could bear with him if he thought it the most important department. Perhaps this exaggerated view of the relative importance of the Sunday-school was one element of his success.

But when in 1863 Clark Wright was transferred from one of the Eastern Conferences and became pastor, he

seemed not to be able to take in the unique situation of a Church with one of its subordinate departments more than twice as large as itself, or comprehend that geometrical contradiction, that in this case the part was greater than the whole. Nor did he understand Samuel Burns, and having himself no small store of ministerial dignity to maintain, it was difficult for him to brook what seemed undue arrogance on the part of Burns.

That both these men were honest in their convictions, and that both loved the Church and were, in their different ways equally loyal, and willing to toil and sacrifice in order to build it up, did not relieve the situation, but as it often happens, the very intensity of their honest convictions increased the tension, and made it more difficult for either to understand the other.

But probably these men might have gotten along together and perpetuated the situation that was so full of present power and future promise, if the pastor in his zeal for the spiritual interests of the Church had not introduced an element into the situation in the person of Mrs. Maggie Van Cott, which, as events proved, greatly increased the difficulty of a satisfactory adjustment of conflicting convictions.

Assuming, as we may properly do, that it was right for the pastor and Burns and the entire Church, to conserve and perpetuate the Sunday-school in the high state of efficiency to which it had been brought, and that Burns was the only man who could do it, and his judgment as to what would best serve this purpose, was entitled to more than ordinary respect. And further assuming that the pastor was right in desiring a revival of religion, and in good faith sought to promote it by what he deemed

the most efficient means, by the employment of Mrs. Van Cott, who had already a great reputation as a successful evangelist; the problem now presented to the pastor and the whole Church was how to perpetuate the now powerful agency for good, the Sunday-school, and also make it possible for Mrs. Van Cott to accomplish all she could in her line of work.

She comes, as every evangelist should come, with a conviction that there is no work so important as the salvation of souls. And in this she shared what has been the universal sentiment of Methodism. She felt that for the time being all else should be subordinated to the revival, and as the leader in the special movement she also felt that all others should willingly submit to her will, and obey her commands, including pastor and Sunday-school superintendent. This had doubtless been conceded to her wherever she had been, and she knew nothing in the conditions at Omaha that would make that an exception. It did not occur to her that by careful and skillful methods, in which the weekly teachers' meeting was a most potent factor, Samuel Burns and his co-workers had built up one of the best schools in Methodism, and that therefore the situation in Omaha presented some features which were peculiar and probably different from any she had ever met, and called for special consideration, and special treatment.

There can be no doubt that Mrs. Van Cott was a consecrated woman, whom the Lord was using in the salvation of many souls. But it is to be feared that she was so constituted that her success had, perhaps unconsciously to herself, exaggerated her conception of her own importance, and narrowed her views as to Church

work, and greatly strengthened a naturally imperious will. This we know sometimes happens in the case of otherwise excellent evangelists. There was probably somewhat in the manner and spirit of her demands that would make it difficult for a man like Samuel Burns to accede to them, even if reasonable. And in view of the peculiar importance of maintaining his large Sunday-school and the teachers' meeting as an essential feature, he could not but regard her demand for unconditional surrender, and entire suspension of the teachers' meeting, even after he had offered to hold it an hour later, so all could attend both services, as unreasonable, and refuse to surrender. Hence the disastrous rupture, that has many times overbalanced all the good that Mrs. Van Cott did in her revival, which would have been great and lasting but for this. And what was equally and more permanently harmful to Omaha Methodism, it destroyed the best Sunday-school she has ever had in her history. And still further, the withdrawal of Burns and his influential followers, was probably the chief cause of subsequent financial embarrassment by which they became bankrupt and lost their property. And we must still add as another item to the dark account of loss, the years of futile effort to build up a rival Church, which cost such men as Lemon, P. C. Johnson, Pardee, Shenk, Beans, and Leedom years of valuable ministry.

Some may doubt the propriety of dwelling so long on this unhappy affair. But the historian has not the option to choose only the pleasant features of the history, but is in duty bound to note what has obstructed the progress of the Church. It is my conviction that no event in the fifty years of Nebraska Methodism has been so far-reach-

ing in its pernicious influences, not only in Omaha, but to some extent, beyond the limits of that city, as this unhappy affair. It is here recorded as a monumental blunder, not to use a harsher name, that should stand out as a warning to good people not to sacrifice the interests of Christ's kingdom for the sake of having one's own way.

Clark Wright was an attractive man and might have succeeded well but for these troubles, and the financial embarrassment. As it was he reports considerable gain in members during his pastorate, but the Sunday School of 700 which he found, dropped down to 400, and this number was not maintained.

He is followed by L. F. Britt, who remains a year and has to his credit a gracious revival resulting in the conversion of some seventy-five. But success along spiritual lines, could not avert the doom of bankruptcy impending, and the bondholders accepted in settlement all their property, both on Seventeenth and Thirteenth Streets, leaving the Church homeless.

At this juncture, that old veteran, H. D. Fisher, was induced to come to the rescue, though he would receive $800 less salary by doing so. He found a homeless Church, but temporary arrangements were made for services in a rented hall. A lot was purchased on Davenport Street, between Seventeenth and Eighteenth, and the third church enterprise was inaugurated, and in due time a plain frame structure, with parsonage at the rear, was completed and dedicated by Mrs. Van Cott. In speaking of this achievement, Dr. Fisher quotes Bishop Haven, who, when he preached in the church remarked to the congregation: (See Gun and Gospel, by Fisher, p. 257.)

"It is marvelous indeed!" and to me, "where did you get all this? We have known of the state of things in Omaha for years before you came. Some said Methodism was dead there and ought to be buried. But when I learned you had gone to Omaha I told my friends 'that means resurrection,' and so it did. The bishop preached for us, and told the congregation that the bishops had regarded the case as practically hopeless, and it was the man from Kansas who, in the economy of grace, had brought them resurrection."

The growth of the city and of the Church seems to call for expansion, and the Second Church has been organized just north of Cumings Street, meeting a growing need of that part of the city. This expansion takes place in the south part of the city, in 1872, and its beginnings are thus reported by the presiding elder:

"Omaha Mission—J. M. Adair, pastor. This is a new work, embracing the scattered settlements not included in any other pastoral charge in Douglas County. A church has been purchased in South Omaha, near the Union Pacific depot, and Brother Adair has labored to pay for it. He has displayed commendable zeal in city and country, but has received for his services barely sufficient to pay his house rent."

In 1879, at the close of Dr. Fisher's pastorate, there appears as pastor, J. B. Maxfield, D. D., one who has already become familiar by his work on pastorates and districts. Of his work here Haynes says:

"He never failed to enlighten his hearers on the subject in hand nor to edify his people. With him in the pulpit the assurance that the services would be interesting was not doubtful; and he was able to hold this good

opinion and respectful hearing to the end of his labors in the charge. Closing the second year as pastor, he was removed to take charge of the Omaha District."

The expansion noted before, consisting of a second charge on Izard Street, enjoyed some prosperity under the successive pastorates of C. A. King, Charles McKelvey, and J. H. Presson, and gave promise of steady growth, being in a growing portion of the city where it was much needed. But in 1874 the party who followed Burns out of the First Church, purchased the building and moved it up onto Eighteenth Street. After some eight or nine years, during which such men as Lemon, Pardee, P. C. Johnson, Beans, Shenk, and Leedom had given their best service, the effort to establish a Church there was given up as hopeless, and it was sold and Seward Street Church established.

South Tenth Street was served during this period by J. M. Adair, T. H. Tibbles, John P. Roe, P. C. Johnson, and David Marquette. Under Father Roe's ministry the Church, during the first year, received his services free of charge on condition that they pay all their debts, amounting then to $500. This was done. The second year he agreed to put the entire salary, $500, into a building fund, to be available when they came to build. It was this and other generous actions of this man of God that made it possible for the writer to carry forward to success the building of both church and parsonage, during his three years' pastorate, beginning in 1879.

CHAPTER XV.

THIRD PERIOD. (1870-1880.)

LINCOLN.

As early as 1857 Salt Creek appeared in the Minutes, and was left to be supplied. As to whether any one was secured for the circuit is not known, nor do we know just what territory was comprised in the circuit that year, and for several subsequent years. But the following year we find, as noted elsewhere, that Zenas B. Turman was assigned to Salt Creek. The first settlement on the site where Lincoln now stands, of which we have any authentic account, was established by Elder Young, and several others who were Methodist Protestants, and had in contemplation the establishment of a colony of their co-religionists, and started a seminary. But the project failed. The next effort was made by parties attracted by the supposed possibility of profitably developing the salt works, and the little village of Lancaster was the result. The superior richness of the salt deposits in Kansas soon made the Nebraska enterprise unprofitable and it was abandoned. But in 1867 Nebraska became a State and must needs have a capital, and Lincoln was selected. The plan was to sell lots enough to put up the State-house, and this being realized, Lancaster became Lincoln, the flourishing capital of the State.

Prior to this, however, probably in 1867, R. H. Hawkes preached on the site where Lincoln now stands.

Father Edward Warnes, who speaks of himself as the oldest settler in Lincoln, having built his cabin near what would now be 719 A Street, in 1862, in an interview in the Lincoln *News,* for October 28, 1903, speaks of Brother Hawkes's ministry as follows:

"Rev. Hawkes was the first preacher. He was a very devout man. Money was scarce then, and the preacher was paid mainly in produce. It appeared that the good preacher and his family had not been remembered by the congregation for some time, and they had come to the point of starvation. A lot of us, hearing of the extreme poverty in which our pastor and his loved ones were placed, met and formed a donation party. We were loaded down with provender—flour, meat, coffee, sugar, and other substantial eatables too numerous to mention. As some of us reached the door we heard a voice engaged in prayer. Through a crack in it we saw the good man on his knees pleading with his Maker to help him in his hour of trouble and asking that a way be found to enable his family and himself to be relieved from the pangs of hunger. I tell you it brought the tears to the eyes of his listeners.

"The produce was quietly and swiftly piled against the door, while the man within continued his prayer for relief. Then when the job was done a loud knock was given on the door and the entire party retired to a safe distance and waited developments. When he opened the door, the stuff piled up fell into the room, and it was laughable and pathetic to see the astonished and grateful look on the face of the recipient."

The following year, 1868, however, marks the real beginning of Lincoln Methodism. Happily, just at this

juncture, when the capital had been located, and was starting out with every prospect of success, H. T. Davis is just closing his three years' pastorate at Nebraska City, and is available for the work of laying the foundation of the Church in Lincoln, being appointed at the Conference that year. Of the beginnings of Lincoln Methodism no one is more competent to speak than H. T. Davis, himself, and in his "Solitary Places Made Glad," he tells the story:

"In the spring of 1868, Lincoln first appeared upon the Minutes of the Nebraska Annual Conference, and the writer was appointed pastor. The town contained a population of some two hundred souls. There was no parsonage, beautifully and richly furnished; no large society to greet the pastor and his family, and give them a royal welcome to a grand reception. The pastor built his own house and furnished it as best he could. While our house was being finished, Mrs. Davis did her cooking in the largest kitchen we ever had, the ceiling was high, the floor beautifully carpeted with living green, the ventilation perfect and our appetites of the very best. Here we lived a number of days in the most roomy apartment we ever had.

"We found sixteen members of the Church, including men, women, and children and a small church on Tenth Street inclosed only. We found another thing we did not like so well. On this shell of a house we found what the little girl called the latest improvement—a $400 mortgage. We went to work, finishing the building, and consecrating it to the worship of Almighty God, Dr. W. B. Slaughter preaching the dedicatory sermon. At the end of one year the building became too small for the congre-

gations. The trustees authorized the pastor to dispose of the church, and the next week I sold it to the School Board of the city for a school-house. On the lots given by the State to the Church, we then built a frame building. This building was afterwards enlarged."

At the close of Dr. Davis's pastorate, Lincoln is favored with the appointment of J. J. Roberts. He is now at the zenith of his great intellectual powers and enters upon his work among a people capable of appreciating his worth, both as a preacher and as a man. He preached at the session of Conference which was held in Lincoln, and well does the writer remember how profoundly that sermon impressed the Conference. He, with his devoted wife, entered upon what promised to be the most fruitful pastorate they had had in Nebraska, but was destined to be cut short by the failing health of Brother Roberts. At the close of the first year he had become a hopeless invalid, rheumatism having fastened its relentless hold upon his physical frame. His presiding elder, Dr. Davis, reports the year's work as follows:

"Lincoln is in a healthy condition. A neat and substantial parsonage, with eight good rooms, two large halls, a good cellar and cistern, has been built during the year at a cost of seventeen hundred dollars, and the whole amount paid, leaving no encumbrance whatever on the property. There is in connection with the Church a large and flourishing Sabbath-school. Brother Roberts's health during the past year has been poor, suffering intensely with rheumatism most of the time; nevertheless he has done an amount of labor that but few under the same circumstances would have performed. A mind of the Pauline type, he is one of the strong men of the

Church, and his trumpet never gives an uncertain sound. He is most emphatically what Paul exhorted Timothy to be, 'A workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word, giving to saint and sinner his portion in due season.'"

After nearly a year of intense suffering, J. J. Roberts closed his earthly career on the 17th of March, 1873.

J. J. Roberts was without doubt one of the ablest preachers Nebraska has ever had. And the strongest features of his preaching did not consist in the arts of the rhetorician or the orator. He rather eschewed these as being unnecessary, depending almost wholly on the capacity of the truth itself to make its way, if it only had a fair chance, by being clearly perceived by the speaker and plainly presented to the people. J. J. Roberts excelled in that marvelous capacity to see a great truth clearly and all truths in their true logical relations, as constituting a system, and grasp the system itself as a whole. This same power enabled him to detect fallacies and expose them most mercilessly. Brother Burch tells of an instance of this kind while Roberts was at Peru. A Christian (Campbellite) preacher was holding a series of meetings at Peru, and according to their usual method at that time, his preaching was of the controversial order, more attention being given to an effort to show that other Churches, especially the Methodist, were wrong, than in convincing sinners of their need of salvation. Roberts attended and after their meetings were over, devoted a little time to the matter in his next prayer-meeting, but in that short time completely swept away the fallacies of two weeks of preaching.

This same keen logical power enabled him to detect shams. These he most heartily despised and took great delight in exposing them.

So complete was his work along these lines that when he got after a fallacy or a sham it took him but a few moments to create the impression on the minds of his hearers that there was nothing left of either sham or fallacy.

His standing among the people of Lincoln is indicated in these extracts from the *Daily State Journal* of March 18, 1873: "The death of J. J. Roberts, though not unexpected, threw a gloom over the city. No man in Lincoln was more generally regarded with respect and veneration than he. His life for months past has been a struggle with terrible pain and suffering, and his indomitable fortitude and cheerfulness, his sterling piety, and his uncomplaining resignation won for him a warm niche in the hearts of all who knew him. His disease was rheumatic gout, that racked his frail body with merciless cruelty for days and weeks together and stretched him helpless on a couch of pain. Mr. Roberts came to Lincoln two years ago as pastor of the First Methodist Episcopal Church, but after a year's faithful service, was obliged to take the superannuated relation. As a preacher he showed a wonderful depth of thought and originality that would have made him a famous orator had his physique possessed the health and energy of his mental organization."

These sentiments of high esteem were shared by all the preachers of the Conference and the members of the charges he had served.

The same year in which J. J. Roberts died witnessed

the departure of that old, battle-scarred veteran, Isaac Burns. His name has often appeared in the earlier pages of this history and always in connection with some valuable service rendered to the cause he loved dearer than his own life. There have been more brilliant men, but none more faithful than Isaac Burns. He was well along in life when he came to Nebraska and was therefore not permitted to give many years to the service. But they were years well filled with toil and sacrifice. He has passed in triumph to his well-earned heavenly reward.

There will be no better place than in connection with this mention of her husband's last days to make some note of the life and character and work of Mrs. M. E. Roberts, who was his devoted wife, a wise mother, and withal, one of the most useful of the "women who have helped."

A determined effort was made during the seventies to turn the State University over to the control of the "Broad Gaugers," as they were called. This, as a matter of fact, had succeeded to the extent of placing a number of free-thinkers of decided infidel proclivities in the Faculty. These lost no opportunity to sneer at the Bible and raise doubts in the minds of the students concerning the doctrines of Christianity. As yet, Methodism had no school of her own and many of our young people were in the State University, as well as the young people of other denominations. Indeed, even now, with nearly every denomination maintaining an institution of its own, it is well known that a majority of the students of the State institutions come from the Christian homes. Of course the percentage was much larger then. Under these circumstances we may be sure that this movement raised a

storm of indignation throughout the State. In 1879 the Nebraska Conference entered this vigorous protest:

"Resolved, That we, as a Christian denomination, enter our earnest protest against the prostitution of the State University to the propagation of modern infidelity, known as "Broad Gauge" or "Liberal" religion, and we do not and can not feel free to send our children there while it is under the influence of teachers who are known to discard the Bible and sneer at Christianity, and who pour contempt upon prayer and the religious services in the chapel by refusing to attend. And we hereby petition the Honorable Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska to make such changes in the Faculty as will protect our children from being perverted by influence and example from the Christian faith which is so dear to us."

Pressure was brought to bear in political circles by which the nefarious scheme was defeated by changing the complexion of the Board of Regents. But it required years to complete the process of elimination.

In the meanwhile the problem for the Christian Churches in Lincoln was, how, for the time being, can we counteract this infidel influence? St. Paul's Church, as might be expected, took the lead in this movement, and of the members of the St. Paul Church, Mrs. M. E. Roberts stood out as the pre-eminent leader, supported by such women as Mrs. Hyde, Mrs. H. T. and A. M. Davis, and Mrs. Peckham, in every effort to save the young men and women exposed to the adverse influences. It was a hand to hand battle, but the Church won, and it is no discredit to the pastors at that time to say that to Mrs. Roberts and her band of godly women was this victory chiefly

due. Many of the Christian fathers and mothers throughout the State will never know the many plans and devices faithfully worked to save their boys and girls. Their homes were made the homes of the young students. Almost before they had had time to become homesick they would be invited by some chum who had been commissioned for that purpose, to attend a sociable at Mrs. Roberts's, or perhaps at the home of some other good sister, and to their surprise would find these consecrated women almost or quite as kind and motherly as their own mothers. Then they would be invited to Church and Sunday-school. Such was the influence of St. Paul's Church through these means, that a son of a Lutheran minister who was converted there while a student at the State University, told the writer that it was hardly possible for a student to remain four years and not be converted.

Of Mrs. Roberts's work and influence during these years, one who himself was the object of her efforts, and the subject of her purifying and uplifting influence, and who, like many other young men, were proud to do, calls himself "one of her boys," shall tell the story:

"Rev. James J. Roberts was appointed pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Lincoln, Nebraska, fifteen years ago, where he continued until his death, two years later. He was a zealous and earnest worker, and his grand life and services have unquestionably much to do with the great Church work now being accomplished in that city. Mrs. M. E. Roberts, the widow, gathering about her her four fatherless children, looked as bravely as possible to the future. She found, after careful examination of her temporal resources, that she had means

of subsistance for herself and family for scarcely three years. The brave lady, however, was not discouraged. She placed herself in the hands of Him who had promised to be a Father to the fatherless and a Husband to the widow. For eleven years Mrs. Roberts taught in the public schools in Lincoln, having from fifty to ninety pupils. Meantime, though she had the care of her family, and of her own business affairs, she found time to do much Christian and charitable work.

"Two years after the death of her husband, Mrs. Roberts made a specific surrender of herself to the Lord, promising to do any work He should place in her hands. First came 'the crusade,' into which she went with other brave women, and since then she has been identified with the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Four years after the crusade, Mrs. Roberts commenced Sunday-school work, her class being composed entirely of young men, and her success in this has been something phenomenal. With great fear and trepidation she began this duty. The class, which began with five or six, has steadily increased, until at present there are over eighty enrolled, and the prospects are bright for one hundred before the year ends. (It did reach one hundred.)

"Mrs. Roberts's methods to obtain members for her class are unique and original. Every stranger is warmly welcomed, introduced, and made to feel at home. He soon begins to feel a personal interest in the class, and invites his friends to attend. Mrs. Roberts visits all business houses and searches for new faces, and when one is found, ascertains at once whether or not the young man is identified with any Church or Sunday-school work. If not, he receives a cordial invitation to attend her class

'next Sunday.' Should he fail to appear, she goes again and again, until finally the young man surrenders to the inevitable and soon finds himself as much interested in the work as if he had been a member of the class for a year. Like Cæsar, the lady knows the name of each of her soldiers, and has always a smile and a hearty welcome for all. Mrs. Roberts carries her class in her heart at all times, and a daily prayer is on her lips for their welfare. She speaks good words to their employers, and invites them to her home. Every week some members of the class are at her home for dinner or tea. For years, in June, the class has a party, to which the young men are accompanied by lady friends.

"The work accomplished by Mrs. Roberts is simply prodigious, and the result of her untiring efforts had placed many a young man in Christian work. A number have entered the ministry, several have gone out as missionaries to foreign countries, and a large majority are earnest Christian workers. This busy woman has no other thought now but to work for the Lord. She has calls from all over the State, and is to be found wherever there is work to do, in prisons, hospitals, and in revivals. Her very face shines with the love of Christ, a wonderful energy, and an insatiable desire for the welfare of souls."

Many of the pastors, the writer among the number, have availed themselves of Mrs. Roberts's wonderful power over young people, by securing her help in revival work. The Woman's Home Missionary Society have availed themselves of her winning ways and organizing ability to extend the usefulness of that beneficent society, she having served in many States as their national organizer. When they laid the corner-stone of the dormi-

tory of their great institution at York, the "Mothers' Jewels Home," as reported at the time, Mrs. M. E. Roberts was introduced as an indefatigable worker in this behalf, and filled with the spirit of prophecy and the inspiration of the hour, thrilled the audience with her burning words of hope and portend of the future of the Home. And at its recent session the Nebraska Conference honored her, and at the same time honored itself even more, by electing her by a large majority on the first ballot, a lay delegate to the General Conference.

But neither this nor many other places of trust in which she has been placed will constitute the chief title of Mrs. M. E. Roberts to distinction in this world or the world to come. This will rather be found in the thousands of young men she has helped in time of discouragement and temptation and led to Christ.

It may be well to note in passing, the great service Methodism has rendered both at Peru and Lincoln in supplying the positive religious and moral conditions in which these State institutions can do their work, but which in the nature of things they can not supply themselves. And the Methodism of the State is entitled to no small part of the credit.

Resuming the history of Lincoln Methodism we find that J. J. Roberts was followed by George S. Alexander, who remained three years. He finds 277 members, including thirty-eight probationers, and leaves 299 members, including twenty-six probationers. His pastorate coincides with the years of the grasshopper visitation, and Lincoln, as all other places, has been checked in growth, which explains the meager increase for these years. At the close of his term in Lincoln Brother Alexander is ap-

pointed chaplain at the penitentiary, and is succeeded as pastor by Dr. W. B. Slaughter. The Church enjoys a steady growth under the scholarly ministry of this true man of God, the membership increasing to 350, and the Sunday-school to 500.

Dr. Slaughter has been in his element in ministering to this cultured spiritual Church.

St. Paul's Church has now reached a point in its development when the demand for a special transfer has set in, and is gratified with the transfer of S. H. Henderson, from the Upper Iowa Conference. The demand for this transfer came from the more spiritual element, Brother Henderson being an exponent of the special holiness movement somewhat prominent in the Church at that time. He had been one of the evangelists at the State Holiness Camp-meeting at Bennett, and had impressed many of the members as being the ideal man for the place.

He entered upon his pastorate with much zeal, and gave special attention in his preaching and social meetings to the necessity of a second blessing. He was a faithful pastor, and withal possessed of a missionary spirit, going out to destitute neighborhoods in the afternoon. There was quite a number of Cumberland Presbyterians settled on Steven's Creek, some six miles east of Lincoln, who had naturally first endeavored to get a preacher of their own denomination to come and organize a Church, applying to Rev. J. B. Green, pastor of that Church in Nebraska City. But that Church could not send a man west of Nebraska City, so they turned to the Methodists, sending a request to Brother Henderson to come and organize a Church. Though burdened with the

care of a large Church, he gladly took up this work, and in May, 1878, he organized what is now known as the Sharon Church. Among the charter members were the following: Mr. and Mrs. Fred Hinkley, Mrs. Martin Babcock, Mrs. Elizabeth Beach, Mrs. George V. Hall, Mrs. Morgan, Miss Eliza Morgan, Mr. and Mrs. D. P. Doubt, Mr. and Mrs. Michael Doubt, Sr., and Mr. and Mrs. J. Michael Doubt.

The first class-leader was Mr. Fred Hinkley, and the first trustees were O. M. Shore, C. C. Beach, Wm. Hotaling, J. M. Doubt, and J. C. Doubt.

During the remainder of the Conference year Brother Henderson faithfully served them, preaching there every alternate Sabbath afternoon. After his pastorate at St. Paul's, S. H. Henderson served several important charges, among them Falls City and Hastings. He was for several years secretary of the Conference. In 1892 Brother Henderson transferred to the West Nebraska Conference, but was soon compelled to take a superannuated relation because of failing health.

S. H. Henderson was born in Tennessee, March 4, 1829, and died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Cone, in Lincoln, Nebraska, April 25, 1899. The brethren of the West Nebraska Conference place on record the following estimate of his work and character: "Brother Henderson was a remarkable man, a many-sided man. Rarely ever do men do many things equally well, but here is found the exception. Whether as civil engineer, school teacher, lawyer, soldier, judge, minister, presiding elder, chaplain of senate, secretary of Conferences and National Holiness Associations, he showed great adaptability and served with great credit to himself and profit to all in-

terested. Twelve years he was presiding elder and fifteen years in the pastorate. He was a strong Biblical scholar, and wore out his commentaries and his Bibles, turning their truths into great sermons and helpful addresses and well remembered exegeses, to the great profit of all who fortunately came under his ministry. He was a manly man, a true friend, a loving and loyal son of the Church. Few men have occupied so high and honorable positions and lifelong associations, and remained so brotherly and fraternal. Any young minister was at home in his presence. He honored his positions and opportunities, but was not unduly exalted thereby. He grew old beautifully. He made no complaints, had no enemies, but patiently bore the increasing infirmities with resignation."

Sharon was attached to the South Lincoln Circuit the following year, with A. L. Folden as pastor. This meant either a church or a revival, and perhaps both. In this case it soon meant a church building, Brother Folden and some of the laymen doing most of the carpenter work. It was dedicated by Brother Folden himself, November 28, 1880. Sharon has remained to this day a flourishing rural Church, and is now served by W. J. Nichols.

This brings into view two significant facts that may be noted here. This Steven's Creek settlement at first preferred another Church, but were compelled to turn to the Methodist Episcopal Church, and did not apply in vain. Few, if any, of the settlements that had members enough for a class sought in vain for a Methodist preacher to organize them, and then find some place in the system by which they could be served.

The other fact was the venture to make another appointment in Lincoln. The Lincoln Circuit was organ-

ized in 1878, and A. L. Folden made pastor. This movement seemed called for by the rapid extension of the city to the southward, and while Brother Henderson remained pastor of St. Paul's, seemed to be acquiesced in, if not heartily approved. But just when the growth of a city makes it impossible for the mother Church to properly care for all the people of that city, is a question not easily answered, and the first movement in the direction of a second Church is often looked on with little favor, and is sometimes met with determined opposition. A. C. Williams, a transfer from the St. Louis Conference, succeeds Henderson at St. Paul's in 1879. He was a strong preacher, soon had large congregations, and seemed prepossessed with the notion that one strong Central Church would best serve the religious interests of the city, and that a diversion of strength by the organization of a second Church would be a blunder. Probably he had no difficulty in bringing his Official Board to a like conviction, in which he and they were perfectly honest, and Brother Folden was regarded as encroaching on their territory. This view seemed confirmed when Folden, being unable to get a suitable place south of J Street, rented the Universalist Church on that street, and proceeded to hold services. This was within five or six squares of St. Paul's, and as a matter of fact was too close for a permanent Church. But clearly this arrangement on the part of Folden was temporary, forced upon him by a hard necessity. He could find no other suitable place in which to do a needed work in South Lincoln. But he was soon waited on by a committee from St. Paul's, who demanded of him by what authority he was preaching in Lincoln. Folden stood his ground and answered that he was there

by the highest authority—Bishop Harris. Matters seemed to have rested at that, and Andrew Folden held an old-fashioned Methodist revival in this Universalist Church, and over one hundred souls were converted, and perhaps many from within the sphere naturally occupied by St. Paul, joined the Second Church. Thus this plucky, determined man finally won his case, and as events have proved, was right in his contention, originating as he did, Trinity Church, which has become one of the most potent centers of religious influence, while St. Paul remains unharmed, being easily the leading Church in Lincoln.

It is not intended by these details to reflect on any one, but to show the very great difficulties which our rapid growth involved. This is a typical case, and is but a repetition of what took place in Omaha, especially under the administration of T. M. House, and has taken place in many other growing cities. In this case, the initiative came from St. Paul's Quarterly Conference, which, at its first session after the Conference in 1878, while S. H. Henderson was pastor, invited A. L. Folden to take up an appointment in South Lincoln, and a committee, consisting of J. C. Johnson and Mr. Lawson, was appointed to aid him in securing a place. But A. C. Williams had entirely different views and was as honest, doubtless, in holding and vigorously maintaining them as Brother Folden himself. But he took too narrow a view, for the time had doubtless come for an advance movement.

A. C. Williams was a preacher who conscientiously viewed religion as an intellectual matter, and this view gave tone and character to his preaching which should be described as intellectual rather than spiritual. It is not meant that he was anti-spiritual, but was inclined to con-

stantly emphasize the intellectual as the true basis of whatever was permanent and of ultimate value in the spiritual. He was a strong personality, and had a large and influential following in the Church. He remained three years, and though there were no revivals there was steady growth.

CHAPTER XVI.

THIRD PERIOD. (1870-1880.)

GENERAL SURVEY.

As we look over the field and note the general situation in the older districts, we see that while all have suffered a serious check, and could nōt be said to have recovered from the disastrous conditions prevailing through a large portion of the period, until 1879, no field has been abandoned, and some advance made every year. Occasionally two circuits or stations have been temporarily combined. This was the case when the writer was appointed to Mt. Pleasant, in 1875, Rock Bluffs Circuit being connected with the Mt. Pleasant for that year. But the first year there were two very precious revivals, one at, or near, Old Wyoming, in the Gregg neighborhood, where there had never been one before, and one at Mt. Pleasant. Out of the number converted there, one John W. Miller, a grandson of Father Gage, entered the ministry. The following year the work was divided again, and T. A. Hull put on the Rock Bluffs portion. During the summer we had a camp-meeting in Brother Schleistemeir's grove, at Mt. Pleasant. Brother Burch and D. F. Rodabaugh were present, and rendered valuable service. The latter preached a sermon of wonderful power on the Sabbath, and at other times during the meeting. It was at this camp-meeting that the death of Mother Davis,

Mrs. Isabella Spurlock's mother, referred to elsewhere by Brother Burch in his account of the camp-meetings, occurred. Out of about ninety conversions, one of these, Earnest B. Crippen, entered the ministry and is now a member of the West Nebraska Conference.

Thus, while for the sake of making the support of the pastor possible, there were a few cases of combination, none that I know of really worked any detriment to the cause.

As we note the development of the work during those ten years, we find in some of these older districts a number of the river towns that had derived their life and importance from the river traffic, steadily running down after the railroads began to extend their lines through the State, and some old, familiar names drop out of the Minutes. Among these are London, Nemaha City, Salem, Rock Bluffs, Bellevue, Florence, Calhoun, and De Soto. But others are growing, and by 1879, we are already aware that they have taken their places permanently among the strong Churches of the State. Among these may be mentioned Falls City, Table Rock, Humboldt, Tecumseh, Pawnee City, Nebraska City, Peru, Plattsmouth, Weeping Water, Lincoln, Seward, Ashland, Omaha, Fremont, Schuyler, Osceola, David City, and Rising. Nearly all of these have become stations, and have a membership of from 100 to 300. They are becoming better organized, and the machinery of the Church is in more skillful hands in some cases. The finances are conducted on more business-like principles and the salaries are growing larger and deficits are growing less. The spiritual interests are cared for more efficiently through more regular means of grace, while the

old-time revivals still prevail. In these, and many others like Beatrice, York, Hastings, Grand Island, Kearney, Central City, that have, or might have been mentioned in connection with our account of the newer districts, Methodism has already ceased to be an experiment, the problem of existence having been finally solved. Henceforth they are to become more and more centers of moral and spiritual power in their respective communities.

BEATRICE DISTRICT. (1871-1875.)

Up to the formation of the Kearney District, Dr. Maxfield has charge of the field as far west as any settlements can be found. Still beyond Red Cloud, where we have seen Wells at work, we find Harlan and Franklin being cared for by C. R. Townsend, formerly of the English Connection, but the presiding elder notes the fact that "from the large extent of the territory some points needing the Gospel have not been reached." Republican City and surrounding country constitute an urgent demand for another man. Up the Little Blue, F. E. Penny, a local preacher, has formed societies, made appointments, and laid the foundations of a compact and prosperous circuit. The old veteran, W. D. Gage, who probably organized the first class in Nebraska, is still in the field, and has organized Dorchester Circuit.

While these new charges are being formed, the older charges on the Beatrice District are being cared for by successive pastors during the four years of Dr. Maxfield's incumbency, and for the most part making progress. This district has also felt the blight of the grasshopper scourge, though perhaps not to the same extent as the Kearney District, the settlements being older and further advanced,

Among others, David Hart has served the Beatrice Station, which though suffering loss through removals, has made some progress, completing its church, building a parsonage, and increasing its membership.

Sterling, which includes Crab Orchard, has for pastor during the most of this period, T. A. Hull, the man to whom the elder wrote not to come, but who nevertheless, did come, and was such an unqualified success that no one was more pleased that his request was ignored than the elder himself, who thus speaks of this man of God in his report for 1874: "He has purchased a commodious parsonage, and his labors at various points have been blessed by good revivals. He is pre-eminently a man of one work. The work has grown, and is still growing." Besides these revivals, a great camp-meeting was held during the summer of 1873. At a prayer-meeting in the big tent from Beatrice there came an old-time manifestation of Divine power, during which some fell and remained in an unconscious, or semi-conscious state, for hours. One, a cultured lady from Beatrice, who fell into this state, relates that it seemed a heavenly experience during which she could hear what was being said about her. She, on her part, wanted to speak, and request that she be not disturbed, but was utterly unable to do so. In due time she came out from the strange spell, happy in the Lord, and none the worse for her remarkable experience.

Many were deeply convicted of sin and most of these happily converted to God. One poor sinner had resisted to the last, however, and just as Dr. Maxfield raised his hands to pronounce the final benediction, the poor fellow rushed up to him and on his knees clasped him about the

feet, and begged piteously that the camp-meeting be not closed till he was saved. The benediction gave place for the time to earnest prayer, during which he was soon soundly converted. The benediction was then pronounced and the great camp-meeting closed.

The writer was appointed to Fairbury in 1872-73, and as was so often the case in those early days, was under the necessity of erecting a small parsonage, in order to have a place in which to live. There were some revivals, and we trust, some growth.

Fairbury made steady progress under the pastorate of Rev. E. Wilkinson, a transfer from Michigan Conference. He was not a revivalist, but, being a sound doctrinal preacher, his mission seemed to be to build up character through the truth. He gave twenty years to the work in Nebraska, and after his death, his brethren put in the Minutes this appreciation of his work and worth:

"Edward Wilkinson was born in Northumberland County, England, January 6, 1822. His early life was spent under deep religious influences. In his boyhood he became an enthusiastic Christian. At the age of nineteen he became a local preacher in the Wesleyan Methodist Church. For several years he continued in this work. In April, 1859, at the advice of Bishop Simpson, he came to America, settling for a short time in Pennsylvania. In 1860 he moved to Michigan, where he resided until 1873, and labored there in the ministry. He then came to Nebraska, where he continued his successful ministerial career till about three years before his death, which occurred at the home of his son, at Weeping Water, April 23, 1900. During his residence in Nebraska, he

filled the following appointments: Fairbury, Weeping Water, Valparaiso, Wahoo, Harvard, Ashland, Steele City, and South Bend. He was a man of superior worth. It is the lot of few men to secure so large a measure of esteem and affection from their brethren in the ministry and their people in the pastorate."

Fairmont has become a part of the Beatrice District, and under the two years' pastorate of J. W. Stewart, who succeeded G. W. Gue, made fine progress.

Crete, in 1865, is still having the same struggle for existence that it had had from the beginning, having been overshadowed at first by the Congregational Church, which had the advantage, owing to the presence of Doane Congregational College. A small church had been built and a few determined laymen, like D. J. F. Reed and his devoted wife, and others, continued to maintain their ground, and were finally rewarded by the Church attaining a commanding and perhaps leading position.

Of the progress of the work on his district during the four years, Dr. Maxfield speaks as follows in his final report:

"The last four years have furnished a history of great interest, demonstrating in many things a remarkable growth. At the beginning of this term there was not a single mile of railway in this district; since then three lines have been completed, running in various directions through the country. Then there was but one Methodist church in the entire district; now there are seven very commodious houses of worship. Then there was not a single parsonage; now the Church possesses six.

"The growth in population has been large, and the increase of our Church membership has kept proportional

pace with this rapid growth. Our Sunday-schools have been largely developed, and still exhibit marked prosperity.

"The preachers, without exception, have obeyed the appointing power at the several Conferences held during this quadrennium, and not a single refusal to go to the allotted work has occurred; neither has an appointment refused to accept the preacher sent. A system producing such fine results with so little friction and no rebellion, must be something more than accidental in its origin, and not seriously defective in its operations.

"Our district of country suffered much in the early part of the season by the ravages of the brood of locusts hatched from the eggs deposited last autumn. The crops of small grain in some localities were entirely destroyed. During the summer, unusual rains flooded the valleys repeatedly; freshets of such magnitude have not been known in the traditions of 'the oldest inhabitant,' for 'the memory of man runneth not to the contrary.' These floods, in some valleys, swept away all the crops which 'the locusts had not devoured.'"

BEATRICE DISTRICT. (1875-1879.)

In 1875, George W. Elwood succeeds Dr. Maxfield on the Beatrice District, and continues four years. Two causes make it more difficult to trace the progress of the work during these years. The first is that there are no presiding elder reports printed after 1878 till 1882. The next cause is the form in which Brother Elwood makes his reports, and their exceeding brevity. However, from his first report we glean the fact that little was done on material lines. One church is inclosed, and a subscrip-

tion of $800 raised for another. Great efforts have been made to remove heavy debts from churches at Crete, Fairmont, Beatrice, and York, with entire success. Old Father Gage succeeds in erecting at Steele City the only parsonage built on the district that year. But according to the following extract from his report they are doing splendidly on spiritual lines.

"The tide of spiritual life rose rapidly during the first three-quarters of the year on nearly all the charges. The present spiritual state of the district, as a whole, is very encouraging. With gratitude to God, we record the year as one of great revival movement. There was the sound of abundance of rain during the first quarter; the second quarter witnessed the great outpouring. The quarterly-meeting were all revival-meetings. All the pastors held protracted services. Most of the local preachers engaged in the work with their might. The membership very generally engaged in the work. In some communities the people seemed to be moved *en masse*. The revival was the prevailing theme of conversation in all circles. One broad sheet of revival flame swept over York, Fairmont, Geneva, Western, Steele City, and Adams Circuits. West Blue, Crete, and Pleasant Hill; Wilber and De Witt and Plum Creek Circuit shared largely in the glorious work. Laborious and persevering efforts were put forth at Beatrice and Blue Springs with good results. The pastors reported about seven hundred conversions, and a goodly number sanctified. A very large proportion of the converts continued faithful. In all this great work of God, the pastors proved themselves worthy leaders. Language is too weak to describe their self-sacrificing labors of love. Their record

is on high, and their reward is sure. All glory to God forever. Amen."

In Elwood's second report we learn of steps being taken toward building churches at several points, but none are actually erected. Two parsonages are built, one by J. S. Orr at Fairmont, and another by E. J. Willis, at York.

Of the men on his district he has this word of commendation:

"The toils, trials, and triumphs of these men of God can not be described with words. The pen of the recording angel has given them a fitting and enduring record on high and the ages of eternity alone can suffice to reveal the results thereof."

In his third report, in 1878, the dominant note is one of progress in debt-paying and church-building: "It will be seen by the statement in the 'Review of the Churches' that great activity prevails in the line of church-building. Two churches have been dedicated to the worship of God. Three churches have been repaired and old debts have been lifted from four. Eight are now in process of completion, and the Lord helping, all will be in use this winter. The smallest of these churches is twenty-four by thirty-six feet. One parsonage has been erected. The lots and lands acquired are too numerous to be described in this report."

In comparing the statistics of 1875 with 1879 there has been a gain of 472 members on the district. The growth in the principal charges appears in the fact that in 1875 there were only four with a membership of over one hundred, while in 1878 there are eight.

The number of churches has more than doubled, the

increase being confined largely to the last two years, the people having begun to recover from the depressions caused by the grasshoppers.

G. W. Elwood retires from the Beatrice District after four years' faithful service, and is succeeded in 1879 by D. F. Rodabaugh.

In 1873, D. F. Rodabaugh came into the Nebraska Conference by transfer. He united with the Rock River Conference in 1859 and came to Nebraska in the prime of his life, with nearly fifteen years' experience in the work. Few men have come to us with greater pulpit ability than D. F. Rodabaugh. He was a hard student, and thoroughly thought out his sermons, which were always interesting and instructive. He never preached any poor sermons, but on special occasions he was a powerful preacher. The first time the writer ever met Brother Rodabaugh was at a camp-meeting held at Mt. Pleasant in 1876, during my pastorate there. Brother Rodabaugh and Hiram Burch had been sent to represent the presiding elder and hold the Mt. Pleasant and Rock Bluffs quarterly-meetings, the latter charge, with T. A. Hull, pastor, joining with us in the camp-meeting. Brother Rodabaugh impressed me as a preacher of extraordinary power, and while all his sermons were impressive, his Sunday morning sermon was overwhelming. It was a great camp-meeting. There were about ninety conversions. This camp-meeting was held within a few miles of where the first camp-meeting in Nebraska was held. It so happened that Mother Davis, who had attended the first, was present. Brother Burch had also attended the first camp-meeting. Mother Davis was taken ill during the meeting, and felt from the first that she would die,

and seemed greatly rejoiced at the prospect of going to heaven from a camp-ground. And the illness did prove fatal, and her funeral took place on the ground, and Brother Burch fittingly preached the funeral sermon. Sister Davis was the mother of Mrs. Spurlock, of the Mothers' Jewels Home, at York.

D. F. Rodabaugh's first charge in Nebraska was Falls City, where he remained three years. Brownville and Nebraska City were his next pastorates, and in all these charges he was a success.

In 1879 he was appointed presiding elder of the Beatrice District, where he remained the full term, and was popular with preachers and people. Soon after leaving the district he transfers to the West Nebraska Conference, where for fifteen years he serves successive charges, rendering valuable service in developing that new Conference to its present strength. But his growing infirmity necessitates his asking for a superannuated relation in 1900, which was granted. He is now residing at Peru.

CHAPTER XVII.

THIRD PERIOD. (1870-1880.)

KEARNEY DISTRICT.

It was providential that just on the eve of a great calamity, A. G. White was placed in charge of Kearney District. He had already had four years' experience on the Omaha District, which had included that portion of the new district which extended along the Union Pacific Railroad and up the Loup Valleys. Of this district, as constituted by Bishop Andrews in 1873, White gives this description in his first report:

"One year ago Kearney District was instituted, having no churches or parsonages, and but two or three charges fully organized. Names of a respectable number of circuits were given, and authority to penetrate the incognita of the plains, discover the territory, gather up the people, organize into societies, and supply them with preachers.

"Armed with this roving commission, we entered upon the work with such frontier experience and energy as we could command, willing to fight with wild beasts, if necessary, and often glad to subsist upon them, that we might find and gather up the scattered elements of our Zion.

"This district, as it has been canvassed, only partially developed, for want of men and means, contains more

territory than the States of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut, and it embraces the interior and western part of the State. The Platte River and Union Pacific Railway extend through the district from west to east, dividing it into two parts nearly equal in size. In the northern section, the Loup River and the most of its tributaries; in the southern part, the whole of the Republican River in Nebraska, are within the bounds of this district. The climate is salubrious; the soil unsurpassed in fertility; the people are intelligent and enterprising, but generally poor. Here are the elements of great physical and spiritual prosperity to be realized in the near future. Now, there is less pride, less infidelity, and less corruption here than in older settlements, and Christian labor will accomplish much more here than there. The moral elements are plastic now, and easily molded and controlled. And the Church that visits the people in their poverty and loneliness, and brings them the sympathy and instruction of the Gospel, will gain their confidence and affection and retain them for all time.

"At last Conference a presiding elder and five pastors were assigned to this new district, but one of the pastors declined to go to his work, one has since withdrawn from the Church, and one has been partially disabled with impaired health. This was a small working force for so vast a region, and it has been increased from time to time by the addition of such ministerial help as could be made available. Several preachers—supernumerary, superannuated and local—are living within the district on homesteads, and as they had a mind to work in the ministry, they were employed. But as the Church could not in any case give more than half salary, it could not reason-

ably claim all their time and energies. It was necessary then to so arrange their work that they could cultivate their claims, and thus make the principal part of their support, and cultivate Immanuel's land as they had opportunity. Some of these preachers have labored with great success, and gathered scores into the Church by conversion, and yet their worldly compensation has been scarcely sufficient to defray their traveling expenses."

According to this first report in 1874 there seems to be as yet no organized charge west of Kearney along the Union Pacific Railroad. North Platte indeed is mentioned as having been left to be supplied, and as having remained unsupplied through the year. These towns on the Union Pacific seem slow in developing Methodistically. Some of them were flourishing in 1867 when the Republican Valley was a hunting ground for the Indians, while at this time (1874) there are several flourishing circuits on the Republican, but none west of Kearney.

Four new circuits are formed with an aggregate membership of 200.

We can not but wish to know something of the men that A. G. White led out on this picket line, who, in the name of King Immanuel, proceeded to set up their banners and take possession.

A few names appear that are already familiar in Nebraska Methodism as having done efficient service. Charles L. Smith is assigned the task of organizing the forces in Hamilton County, and gives a year of faithful, effective service, reporting more than 100 members.

E. J. Willis, frail in body, cultured in mind, brave and devoted in spirit, does the same service in Clay County.

These two, Smith and Willis, are the only effective elders reporting from this district at the following Conference.

We find in the Loup Valley, at St. Paul, Richard Pearson, who has just been received on trial in the Conference. But he has been serving in Saunders County as a supply for two years, and has been spoken of by his presiding elder as a "sort of spiritual fire-brand, leaving light and heat and power all over the circuit, every week witnessing an advance." Evidently his work at St. Paul is in the same spirit, and with substantially the same results. A church is built and over 100 added to the membership. Before the year is out he will find cause to be thankful that he brought a good supply of clothing from England, for he will not be able to buy any for some years to come.

Of the supplies, he found and put to work, D. A. Crowel, a supernumerary, who is sent to Kearney Circuit. A church built and nearly one hundred added to the membership, are facts mentioned by the presiding elder, as showing him to be a "workman that needed not to be ashamed." He is soon after transferred to this Conference, but continued ill health limits his career of usefulness in Nebraska to a few years.

A superannuated brother, J. S. Donaldson, of Northwest Indiana Conference, though sixty-six years old, does effective work as a supply on the Grand Island Circuit, building a church at Grand Island. The presiding elder reports that notwithstanding this efficient service he is obliged to labor with his hands a portion of the time to secure the necessaries of life.

Among the supplies that came to the assistance of

Elder White at this trying time was Jepthah Marsh. He was born in Pennsylvania, February 6, 1825, was converted and joined the Church at the age of nineteen, and married to Miss Jerusha Campbell in 1850. He was licensed to preach in 1853 and received on trial in the Erie Conference in 1854. As supply and member of Conference he gave eight or nine years to the work of the ministry in that Conference during which his labors were uniformly successful, his earnest, faithful preaching being always attended with some revival power, and sometimes he was blessed with great revivals. At one place a number of Indians were converted, one of whom became a preacher of the Gospel.

His health failing, he took a supernumerary relation and came to Nebraska, March, 1873, intending to rest, and refrain from preaching at least a year. But such was the urgent need for men he was induced by Elder White to supply Wood River Circuit, beginning this pastorate in May. Thus began the ministerial career of Jepthah Marsh in Nebraska. He is still on fire with a burning zeal and nearly everywhere he has gone, has kindled a flame of revival power, besides building up the Church in other ways. When he prays he seems to get close up to the throne of Divine power. He was transferred to Nebraska Conference in 1874.

Few have been more useful than has this saintly man during the year of his active ministry, both in Pennsylvania and Nebraska, and few crowns will have more stars than will the one our Lord will place on the brow of this humble servant, when he finally says to him, "Well done." He resides at University Place, and together with his faithful companion, is a benediction to all who come

within the range of their influence. He is an honored superannuate of the Nebraska Conference. May God raise up many more men like Jepthah Marsh.

Perhaps the presiding elder deemed it a misfortune that the man he depended on did not go to Red Cloud, but it turned out otherwise when Charles Reilly, a local preacher, was found and sent in his stead. There had already been good work done in laying the foundations by that skillful and devoted workman, C. W. Wells, and that free lance, George Hummel, a local preacher, who had been holding revival-meetings in all that section, adding many to the Church. "Never," reports the presiding elder, "was appointment more fortunate. He found the Methodist elements scattered, but soon gathered them up and engaged in special services with a view to saving sinners. He worked each week as though it was his last. He succeeded marvelously, and for months many souls were saved every week. He has sixteen appointments and has had revivals at nearly all of them." The membership was increased from fifty-six to one hundred and fifty-five. He was admitted on trial at the Conference of 1874, and continued in the work for some years, but was compelled to relinquish his work in 1879 and take a supernumerary relation, and is now a superannuated member of Nebraska Conference. He resides in Kearney, and as police judge is administering the law with the same fidelity that he preached the Gospel.

Of M. A. Fairchild, who supplied Clarksville, the presiding elder significantly says, that "he expected but little from the people in the way of salary and was not disappointed." His service, "rendered in fatigue from the physical labors of the work during the week (made

necessary by the scanty pay), and without previous study, could not be as edifying as the Church needs, or as he could have performed under more favorable circumstances. And this applies to nearly all the preachers of the district."

Of the marvelous results of this year's work on the Kearney District the presiding elder informs us in this extract from his first report:

"At the beginning of the year the membership of the district amounted to four hundred and ninety-two; now, we number fifteen hundred and fifty. As we report sixteen charges, the increase of ten hundred and fifty-eight in the membership may not seem remarkable. But it should be remembered that some of these circuits have recently been organized and most of the pastors have given at least half their time to business to eke out a support which the circuits could not give them, and some of them could give no more than two-sevenths of their time to the ministry.

"But the Lord has been with us, and this explains our success.

"There was no Church property reported to last Conference from the territory included in this district; now we have property to the value of $10,000.

"This was considered missionary ground, and during the year we have received funds to aid in the work as follows:

From the Board of Missions,	$2,512 50
From the Board of Church Extension (by donation),	300 00
Total,	$2,812 50

"And in return for this investment the Church has acquired ten hundred and fifty members and property to the value of $10,000. And larger appropriations of missionary and Church Extension funds would have been proportionally profitable to the Church. And the amount received is regarded as a Gospel loan to be repaid with interest in yearly installments; and we have already commenced the liquidation of this debt.

"We have explored the country, discovered some of its necessities and possibilities; we have extended our skirmish line one hundred miles into the interior, and taken up some positions of strength and strategical importance. But how little, comparatively, has been accomplished towards making the desert glad with the light and civilization of the Gospel! The outposts are to be held and strengthened, and made batteries of Christian power.

"The great battles are yet to be fought, the great obstacles to be overcome, and the great armies are yet to be supported in the field. And for this work we need men of mighty faith to lead the forlorn hopes of Christian enterprise,—men of practical wisdom, mighty in word as well as in deed, to inspire confidence, infuse zeal, and organize the forces of the Church.

"There is a little band of laborers engaged in this work who feel that God wills they should remain. The Church can do but little for them and the world will do less. The grasshopper plague has visited every part of the district, and not a field escaped; the corn crop, which was the main dependence of the frontier settlers, is ruined, and gaunt poverty frowns upon preachers and people, but 'in some way or other the Lord will provide,' or, if not, still we will remain and share in the fortunes

of the people if the authorities of the Church shall so order."

It will be noted that in his jubilation over the grand achievements he almost forgets the grasshopper scourge, which began in the summer of 1874, merely mentioning it.

The next three years on this district embraces the period of the grasshopper devastation, and their history is a pathetic story of suffering on the part of the people in the district, and of heroic self-sacrifice on the part of the presiding elder and preachers. But it is also an inspiring story of splendid generosity on the part of the people in the older parts of Nebraska, and throughout the Church further east, by which these sufferings were greatly alleviated.

It certainly presents a great and unlooked-for emergency. Will Methodism be ready for this emergency, and the man in charge be master of the situation?

Perhaps what has been said is sufficient as a portrayal of how Methodism met the great emergency caused by the sudden inflow of vast numbers of people, and kept pace with the rapidly advancing tide as it swept over the prairies toward the western line of the State. A Church that could successfully meet and cope with such an emergency, may be confidently expected to be ready for any emergency. Surely, though, a severer test remains, when she is confronted with the conditions brought by the grasshopper plague. There had been much of hardship, it is true, connected with the rapidly developing work of the early seventies, but there was progress in both Church and State, and therefore much to inspire and encourage, and all were in good heart. The settler had built his

cabin or sod house, the latter becoming the prevailing type when the table-lands between the streams were occupied. He had broken out enough prairie to furnish him a good crop the second year. Even the first year there was enough sod corn raised to carry his stock through the winter. This was one of the advantages the early settler of the prairie States had over the early settlers of Ohio and Indiana. There the timber had to be removed, stumps uprooted, and work that required many years of toil had to be done, before much of a farm could be opened. But here a most excellent and productive farm could be made in a year or two, and the advance toward comfort and a competence was much more rapid.

The people were confidently looking forward to what seemed a bright and prosperous future, when they should move out of the "soddy" into the more comfortable home, and build school-houses and churches, and surround themselves with all the elements of highest Christian civilization. Indeed, it would be difficult to conceive of a brighter prospect than that which invited the people of Nebraska to honest toil, and incited them to hopeful industry, from 1870 to 1874. But suddenly, without a moment's warning, an enemy appeared that changed the whole situation from one of brightest hopefulness to one of darkest despair; from rapidly increasing comfort to abject misery.

Somewhere on the unoccupied plains of the great Northwest, there had been hatched countless millions of locusts, commonly called grasshoppers. Food supplies being soon exhausted in their native habitat, they followed their unerring instinct which led them with deadly precision to the productive farms of the settlers in the West.

And men who, in the morning looked out on thrifty crops and were already estimating there gain, were compelled in the evening to look on a scene of utter devastation. In the meanwhile, puissant man stood helpless in the presence of this tiny insect whose combined energy thus far exceeded his own. But the picture of utter ruin wrought by these pests, and the constant scenes of suffering inflicted on these settlers, especially in the large sections which had been so recently settled that people had not been able to accumulate anything as a reserve, can best be drawn by some who were in the midst of the scenes of desolation. Dr. Maxfield, whose district suffered much, thus paints the picture:

"There have been certain reminders visiting us upon this district this year, keeping us keenly alive to the fact that we are still upon earth and not in heaven. I refer to the scourge of hot winds and grasshoppers, which I hitherto forbore to mention, because it rested heavily alike upon all parts of the district, without exception. The harvest of small crops—wheat, oats, and barley—had been gathered when the grasshoppers fell like snowflakes from the skies. Myriads in multitude, they settled everywhere, and devoured the vegetables in the garden and the growing corn in the fields. All consumed in an incredibly short space of time. Relentlessly the work of ruin proceeded until nothing but the ruin of the farmers' prospects remained.

To those who have not visited the wasted districts, no adequate idea can be conveyed of the extent and completeness of the disaster visited upon us. Families dependent upon corn alone are in a condition of absolute destitution. Individual instances of suffering are not given,

for, where the suffering is so general, to do so would seem an invidious distinction against a multitude equally worthy of mention. But very few families have left this district on account of this calamity. With a fortitude and courage praiseworthy in the highest degree, they have nearly all of them elected to remain. They have not asked to have the field curtailed, but that more preachers be given. A people so brave demand the best ministry in the world.

"Of the preachers, but little can be said in blame or reproof. Volumes might be justly filled with their praise. I am unable to justly write the records of their noble lives and heroic sacrifices, but they are written in the book of God's remembrance, they shall be read at the last day in the hearing of all nations."

While the whole State suffered and all the presiding elders make pathetic allusion to the scourge, Kearney District is the storm center of this awful visitation. Here the settlements were all new and scarcely any one had more than enough for a bare subsistence, even if their crops had matured. Hence there is no one more competent to tell the sad story than A. G. White, the heroic, resourceful, and self-sacrificing presiding elder. He says:

"One year ago Kearney District was financially prostrate. 'The destruction that wasteth at noon-day' had come upon the whole land in the shape of prairie locusts; the crops were consumed and the people left destitute and helpless. They could not carry forward their Church enterprises nor support preachers, or even obtain for themselves the necessaries of life, and yet they needed the Gospel none the less for their misfortune; and the Church could not with honor, or with any Christian propriety,

withdraw from the field merely because the people had been unfortunate. The missionary appropriation was barely sufficient to pay the house rent for the preacher, and this was about all the visible means of support they had. A forlorn hope without ammunition, and depending wholly upon the bayonet, has, in a desperate emergency, saved the honor of an army. And so these preachers went forth as representatives of a Gospel faith and of sacrifice and found the Divine assurance still in practical force, 'Lo, I am with you.' Some of them have traveled their extensive circuits the whole year on foot, giving full proof of their ministry, and not neglecting the people in their underground cabins, who, in many cases, were kept at home for the want of clothing. And through the benevolence of Eastern friends these preachers have distributed relief to the amount of thousands of dollars among our needy people. Their congregations have been increased by distributing clothing to the poor who could otherwise not appear in public, and some were converted in the garments furnished them and thus enabled to attend public worship. This has been a year of faith and trial. The preachers were led by the spirit into the wilderness, not knowing how they were to subsist, but 'bread has been given and their water has been sure.' Not one who went to his work was compelled by poverty to leave; two were faint-hearted and declined their appointments. The past winter was unfavorable to special services, being intensely cold, and the people so straitened in their circumstances that they could not in every place obtain fuel and light for a place of worship, and many of them abandoned the country on account of the scourge.

"At the time the appointments were made last Con-

ference, it was apparent that the work could not be done unless extraordinary means should be used to procure subsistence for the preachers. Bishop Bowman had been in the district and knew the destitution of our people, and that many of them were not able to provide for themselves, and must receive charitable assistance or perish; he therefore advised me to go East for assistance, and gave me letters of commendation to our more fortunate brethren in the distance. Governor Furnas also highly approved of this charitable mission.

After hastily arranging the district work and supplying a few charges with pastors, I went East to procure subsistance for the needy. My mission was regarded with great favor, and the people responded with a liberality far beyond my expectation. After an absence of two months, and organizing relief agencies as far as practicable in that time, I returned to take the oversight of the distribution of supplies, and perform district work as I had opportunity. An extensive correspondence was opened up and supplies collected by this means from twenty-two States and Territories.

Amount collected in cash, ...	$2,850 00
Amount collected in other supplies, ...	10,460 00
Total, ...	$13,310 00

"Whole expense for collecting and distributing, including freight, expressage, stationery, postage, etc., $409.50, or a little more than three per cent.

"I have taken vouchers for the cash distributed, but not for the other supplies, as they were sent in bulk, for the most part, to preachers and others who were well known, who would charge themselves with the work of

distributing them. A statement of this business, and vouchers for the cash, are prepared for the information of Conference, and a committee is desired to inspect them. We have received timely assistance from the Boards of Missions and Church Extension, and from our Sunday-school Union, and thus we have been enabled, not only to maintain our position, but to strengthen it in spite of the plague of last year. We have not done much in return, but have formed a higher appreciation of these great connectional interests, and propose to express it in a more practical manner in the future. Many of the people contracted debts the past year, but they have been favored with a good crop, and are again on the road to prosperity. The storm of adversity has winnowed out the chaff of our population, but the men of weight, of intelligence, of firmness and faith, remain to work out the fortunes of the Church and State; and these people, many of them from the great cities, and from educational centers, are to be provided with the Gospel, and for this work the best talent of the Church is needed; not the frothy and fanciful that floats upon the popular wave, but practical, consecrated workers to meet and mold the elements of society, and to cut the channels for fortune to run in.

"For this work we do not desire one thousand-dollar men, nor two thousand-dollar men, nor three thousand-dollar men, but men who are not in the market—men who are above all price, who feel the force of the Master's prayer and abide by it. 'As thou, Father, hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.'"

The story of these marvelous four years on the Kearney District will find a fitting conclusion in the following

summary of results contained in A. G. White's last report, made at the Conference of 1877:

"Four years ago Kearney District had neither church nor parsonage; now it has eight churches and three parsonages, worth at least $16,000 over all indebtedness. And in addition to the above, six lots have been procured in Red Cloud and three in Fairfield for church purposes, and $2,000 provided for churches thereon. Then that entire region contained but 492 members, and 309 of those were taken into the Church under my supervision in connection with Omaha District. Now we have a membership of 2,200. Then there was not a Sunday-school in that vast territory, excepting on Clarksville Circuit—a new charge which had been organized and supplied by myself. Now we have fifty-four schools, 352 officers and teachers, 1,606 scholars, and 1,500 volumes in libraries. During every year of this district's existence a majority of the charges were left without pastors, and on those charges supplied by the elder has been more than half the increase in members and church property. All the members of Conference in Kearney District were brought into Conference through my agency; so we have not drawn heavily upon the working force of the Conference.

"During the last four years I have collected outside of the State, and distributed in it, in furtherance of our Church work, more money and its equivalent than the Church has ever paid me as fees and salary; so I have not been a financial burden.

"During these four years I have appointed fifty pastors. The most of these were noble men, and true to the great interests of the Church; but in a few instances, yielding to the clamor of the people for preachers and

depending mainly upon the commendations of strangers, I appointed men who were unsuitable for the work; but when this became known they were speedily dismissed.

"We have aimed at better things, and with the means employed, would have wrought out better results in ordinary times; but we are thankful to a kind Providence that it is no worse, and thankful to the brethren in the ministry for their efficient co-operation. And if in view of the peculiar conditions of the district, greater success has been realized than is customary in like circumstances, it may not be improper to indicate here the policy which has contributed to this result.

"I have never supposed that my appointment to this position was a personal favor, or made for my good; and it has never occurred to me that I had any right to use the influence of my office to accommodate personal friends. I have acted conscientiously upon the belief that the preachers were the servants of the Church, and not the masters. And in appointing or recommending them for particular positions, I have sought first the greatest good of the Church, and always held that the interests of the preachers were of secondary importance.

"And while I never made an appointment for the purpose of gaining a friend, or retaining one, I have fortunately been associated with men of such broad Christian principles, that they have thought none the less of me for holding their interests in abeyance. These preachers are impressed with the idea that 'the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.' Hence, while they modestly profess their kinship to Christ, with vigor and persistence they demonstrate the fact by their works. And they cultivate a type of piety which is not boisterous

or showy, but fruitful. And they have exhibited a superior ability to cause things to come to pass. If they had no opportunity for usefulness, they quickly made an opportunity and improved it. If circumstances were unfavorable, they proceeded to convert the circumstances and then use them. And as the coral insect, with no other resources, finds in its own body the substance for the foundation of a continent, so these brethren, 'with a heart for any fate,' with but little human support, either financial or moral, and thrown out across the track of the destroyer, have drawn from their personal resources the material for a monument of ministerial efficiency, which proclaims them to be in the true succession from the Head of the Church through the founder of Methodism."

Of A. G. White's personal service and sacrifices, he says little or nothing, but the spirit in which he did it, and the character of the man will be better understood by a few facts that others relate. Many a hard-pressed pastor was surprised when he had taken the collection for the presiding elder's claim, to have it quietly handed back with the remark, "You need it more than I do."

He would allow nothing but insurmountable obstacles to keep him from his appointments. At one time he was due at Gibbon to hold a quarterly-meeting some time in the month of March, and coming up from the south, found no way of crossing the Platte, but to wade it, which he promptly proceeded to do, reaching his quarterly-meeting in time, with zeal for God's cause undiminished. The ministers came to the nearest railroad for him and brought him back wherever practicable. Brother Hale took him sixty-five miles on one occasion. But it was not always possible for the pastors to do this, especially

in such cases, of which there were not a few, where the pastors themselves had no horse, and were compelled to travel their large circuits on foot. But if A. G. White could get to his quarterly-meeting no other way, he would not hesitate to go on foot, often walking long distances rather than miss his appointment.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THIRD PERIOD. (1870-1880.)

KEARNEY DISTRICT CONTINUED.

If it was providential that A. G. White should be placed in charge of Kearney District in 1873, on the eve of a great calamity, it was equally fortunate that T. B. Lemon should be assigned to the district, just as it was rallying from the effects of that calamity and girding itself for a marvelous advance along all lines.

It is no secret that T. B. Lemon felt aggrieved that he should be sent to that hard field, nor is it surprising that he should feel so. He is already well advanced in life, being fifty-eight years old, and not being very vigorous in body, he naturally feared that he would be physically unable to stand the strain. Indeed, it really seemed perilous, and many of his friends earnestly protested against the appointment. In all this there is absolutely no taint of disloyalty on the part of Dr. Lemon, and it is not to his discredit in the least that he should hesitate in the matter.

But this is one of those cases where the wisest do not always know what is best for them, and an over-ruling Providence seems strangely directing our course.

Dr. Lemon entered heartily into the work on the district, and soon found his health improving, and coming

to like the work, was permitted to do his greatest work on this district.

It is remarkable that while the grasshopper scourge temporarily checked immigration, it did not stop it. The increase in population in the State from 1870 to 1875 was 124,000, while it was 205,000 from 1875 to 1880. The smaller increase for the first half of the decade as compared with the last half, is doubtless owing to the larger number leaving the State at that time.

Up to the close of Dr. Lemon's first year on this district, the country barely had time to rally from the disasters of the preceding three years, and in his first report the tone is not so hopeful and jubilant as in subsequent reports. There had been much to confirm his conviction that the appointment was a mistake. He had had a long and severe spell of sickness early in the year. The doubts regarding the future of the country were still prevalent and seemed well grounded. The force at his command, both of men and means, seemed inadequate. But recovering from that illness he takes up his great task, visits his vast field, musters such forces as are at his command, and by the following year things begin to move at a rapid rate under the inspiring leadership of this strong man.

The strength of his Christian character is revealed in no other way so clearly as in resistance of the temptation to give up so sadly expressed in these words contained in his first report:

"The Church has not received much addition from the immigration of the past year, but the people are coming and the valleys and divides are filling up and the Gospel preached by earnest, consecrated men can bring them to Christ. Within this vast territory there were

twenty-one appointments and only eight men appointed by the bishop from the Conference, leaving thirteen appointments to be supplied, with only $1,400 to aid the men to work this field, and every charge purely missionary. With so few men, such limited means, and our own health impaired by overtaxing our energies during the past year, and the extent of the field before us, we felt more like giving up than ever before, but after prayer and reflection, we resolved to be obedient to the powers that be and enter upon and do the best we could, with very little expectation of standing it for the year, or appearing before this Conference with a report from Kearney District, but God has been good, and in mercy has preserved us. During the first quarter we did but little in consequence of an illness which prostrated us for a part of the winter, but the few men sent to the district did double work to aid us, and they ably served the charges they were sent to, so that no loss was sustained by our absence."

None but the strongest character, grounded in mighty faith in God, could have met this moral crisis, and conquered, as did T. B. Lemon. We honor him all the more because he stands the severest test to which a Methodist preacher can be sometimes subjected, to honestly question the wisdom and justice of the appointing power.

But not only does he remain firm and go to his task in the spirit of loyal submission to constituted authority, but we find even in his first report some fore-gleams of that fiery enthusiasm which soon comes to characterize the spirit in which he did his work in that portion of the State. And what is perhaps of even more importance, he was able to communicate this enthusiasm to the band

of workers he soon gathered about him. Hereafter his reports to Conference were an inspiration to all of us.

Perhaps no portion of the story of the first twenty-five years of Nebraska Methodism is more pathetic in the tale of suffering to be recorded, or more inspiring in the recital of the heroic self-sacrifice of the preachers, and the marvelous growth of the district in the face of these sufferings.

When the district was organized in 1873, few in the Conference had much faith in the enterprise except A. G. White. When the report of the Committee on Appropriations of missionary money to the different missions was presented, one brother moved to strike out some of the missions in the proposed Kearney District, and had his map and other proofs ready to show that that part of the country could not be settled, and that to appropriate missionary money to such a field was to squander it. But the men of faith prevailed and Kearney District set out on its eventful career.

Small indeed were its beginnings, as has already been mentioned. Had all the conditions remained favorable, the actual achievements of seven years could hardly have seemed possible. But when we remember that through nearly or quite half of this seven years the conditions were about as bad as they possibly could be, many leaving the country, and those that remained being so impoverished as to be unable to build any churches or parsonages, or even pay their pastors enough to keep them from suffering, the growth has been simply marvelous.

In his first report, after stating that his district contained thirty-one counties, lying principally in the Republican, Platte, and Loup Valleys, and containing an

area of 20,000 square miles, Dr. Lemon speaks this of the year's work and of its difficulties:

"We think the statistics will show that our frontier district has not been neglected, but the duties enjoined by our Discipline have been attended to. We have in person visited all the counties in the district and made personal examination of the country and its wants and what we say of the demands are from personal observation. We need for that vast district of country men and means. Our sister Churches are putting up their best young men at the important centers and places of promise along the thoroughfares of travel, and liberally supporting them from their mission and Church Extension funds, and saying, 'Occupy and build churches, and we will help you until your people can sustain themselves.' Alongside of these agencies we are compelled to employ the local preacher, who has to toil day by day to support his family, as the people are not able to support him, and our missionary appropriation to these charges very small—amounting only to some fifty dollars—while in the same places our sister Churches give from four hundred to seven hundred dollars to their preachers. Yet with all these disadvantages, our employed local aid and the few men sent from Conference, have nobly met and overcome the discouragements, and the results of their labors have been glorious, but how much greater would have been the results if we had had the men and means to meet the increasing demands of that growing country! Give us these and you will hear good tidings from the West."

The reader will doubtless want to know something more about these men who rallied around Dr. Lemon, and under his leadership brought about such results.

Besides the men that T. B. Lemon found on the district of whom mention has been made, there is one, Rev. C. A. Hale, whom we find at St. Paul. He has already done much pioneer work, penetrating as early as 1875 into the unorganized territory now comprised in Custer County, preaching the first sermon and organizing the first Sunday-school in all that section of country, in a dug-out on the Middle Loup River, at what is now Comstock. Twenty miles further up the Loup was Lillian settlement, and here in the summer of 1875, Brother Hale and another minister of a sister Church, preached the first sermons in that part of the country. We have no means of knowing which was first, but if the usual custom was adhered to it was that of the Methodist preacher. Brother Lemon finds Brother Hale at St. Paul in 1877, with a large family, just at the close of three successive years of grasshopper devastation. He feels it due to his family to suspend preaching for a time. Of this enforced retirement Dr. Lemon says in his report: "We regret to lose Brother Hale from the ministry; he is a good preacher, a pure, upright man." But he is back in the ranks again in a few years and T. B. Lemon had no more loyal supporter, and West Nebraska Methodism received a large contribution from his faithful and efficient labors on small stations, large circuits and districts through many succeeding years. His brethren express their appreciation of the worth of the man and his work by electing him as a delegate to the General Conference in 1896.

Brother Hale was transferred to the Nebraska Conference in 1900, and has most of the time since resided in University Place, serving such charges as are contiguous, and still doing good work for the Master.

Others come into the district this first year. Among these is the brilliant orator and erratic man, John Armstrong, who serves Kearney, and who, after attaining to the position of a special transfer, was in demand by some of the best Churches, and actually filled some of the best pulpits in Methodism. Finally, when pastor of one of the best Churches in Kansas City, he drops out of the ministry because of an unwillingness to pay his honest debts, a trait that had characterized to some extent his whole career, but had grown worse, as usual, and became intolerable.

Edward Thomson, son of Bishop Thomson, is at Hastings, but is soon changed to North Platte, which is seen by the keen perception of this wise presiding elder to have reached a point, where the right man, given a fair chance, will bring the charge into conditions of permanent strength. This is what Edward Thomson did for North Platte. He is soon to be called to the educational work of the Church, and as related elsewhere, is the first principal of our first Conference Seminary at York. He is afterward called to the head of the Mallalieu University in 1886.

Thomson's place at Hastings is filled by A. C. Crosthwaite, a transfer from the Pennsylvania Conference. He remains three years and his presiding elder says, "has proved himself to be the right man in the right place." He, too, comes to Hastings at a critical time, when the right man can start a charge on a career of permanent growth and power. This is what Crosthwaite did for Hastings, building a fine church and strengthening the work there along all lines, and it has ever since taken rank as one of our most important stations.

The writer first met A. C. Crosthwaite at a meeting of the Conference Church Extension Board, being a member at the time. He well remembers with what thoroughness Brother Crosthwaite, who was there with an application for aid for the Hastings Church, presented his case and won it. I have been impressed since as I have watched his career, as he has filled the successive important places to which he has been appointed, that the secret of his pronounced success may be found in that one trait, thoroughness, more than in any other one thing. Besides Hastings he has served many of our most important pasorates, including York, and a full term as presiding elder of the York District. He was for many years secretary of the Conference, and in 1888 was one of the delegates to the General Conference, and was chosen one of the assistant secretaries of that body. He is still in the effective ranks, serving his second year at Edgar, and gives promise of many more useful years of work.

Another name appears on the Kearney District in 1878 that presents some remarkable features. Charles L. Brockway was received on trial in 1876, and in 1880, at the same Conference that he was ordained elder, he was appointed presiding elder of the Hastings District. This rapid advance to a place of such responsibility has occurred but few times, if ever, in the history of Methodism, and certainly never before or since in the history of Nebraska Methodism. The nearest approach to it was the case of Leslie Stevens, who was ordained elder in 1885, and appointed presiding elder in 1886. This was also under Dr. Lemon's administration, and was one of the best things he ever did.

Brockway had joined the Conference on trial under

Dr. Lemon, while the latter was yet presiding elder of the Nebraska City District, and joined the ranks of his devoted followers in the Kearney District in 1878. They were mutually attracted to each other, Dr. Lemon so strongly impressing himself on the younger man that he either consciously or unconsciously imitated the Doctor's peculiar style of oratory so closely as to be a matter of common remark. But this was the case with Amsbary and many other young preachers who came under the spell of his oratory. But there was also something about Brockway that strongly impressed Dr. Lemon with his superior talent and capability. Brockway had been a lawyer before entering the ministry, and was a well-matured man when he entered our work. Besides, his self-consciousness relieved him of any of those difficulties arising from diffidence which sometimes hinders young men at the beginning of their career. This natural tendency to undue self-confidence might have remained within proper bounds had he not been unduly pushed forward. If Dr. Lemon failed anywhere it was at this point, where his affection for one of his boys tended to blind him to any possible danger of this kind and he recommended Brockway for presiding elder when the Hastings District was formed. This proved a calamity for the Church, and a misfortune to Brockway himself. His vanity was inflamed, and he became reckless in his conduct and fell.

Perhaps of all the young men who rallied round T. B. Lemon, none were superior, and few equal, to Leslie Stevens, who joined the ranks in 1878, and was received on trial in 1880. Of the character and career of this choice young man, a writer who worked by his side and knew him well, shall speak. I quote from an article pub-

lished in a newspaper on the eve of his departure for China to become superintendent of Central China Mission:

"Rev. Leslie Stevens, presiding elder of Kearney District, and under appointment as superintendent of the Central China Mission, was born in Michigan, April 25, 1858, and is therefore thirty-two years of age. As a boy he attended the public schools and obtained a fair common school education to which he has since added a large store of special and general knowledge by intelligent effort and intense application to books and professional duties, as a pastor and presiding elder on the frontier of Nebraska.

"He early in life embraced religion and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. A short time in the work of the Church convinced him that he was called of God to be a messenger of His truth. Licensed to preach he served as a supply for about a year and a half, and in 1880 was admitted on trial in the Nebraska Conference. For five years after his admission into the Conference, he did splendid work all over Western Nebraska. So great was his success in administering the affairs of the Church, that at the Annual Conference, held at Sidney in the fall of 1886, he was appointed presiding elder of Sidney District. This appointment was made through the efforts of that great and good man, who very recently has gone to his reward, Rev. Dr. Lemon, who having the greatest confidence in the young man's judgment, honesty, and capacity, gave him such strong indorsements that the presiding bishop could not do otherwise than appoint him to the honorable position. The action of the bishop in appointing such a young man

to such a position was severely criticised at the time, but time has proven the wisdom of his choice. One year in the presiding eldership was sufficient for the people everywhere in the district to recognize that he had by his energetic efforts, indomitable pluck, devotion to the Church, and executive ability, deserved the honor. He entered upon his duties of the second year in the same position, fully conversant with the Churches and people in his district. He displayed the same activity, sympathy, and zeal in serving the humblest Church that he did for the most influential. In the fall of 1887, Brother Stevens was taken from the Sidney District and placed in charge of the Kearney District, the strongest and most important district in the West Nebraska Conference. From that time to the present he has labored assiduously for the Church and district, over which he presides with so much grace.

"The Kearney District has made wonderful growth during his incumbency. When he was pastor at St. Paul, Nebraska, he wooed and won Miss Minnie Phillips, of that city. We would feel that this sketch would be incomplete, if we failed to say anything of Brother Stevens's wife.

"Mrs. Stevens is a noble woman of queenly bearing. Her sunny spirit has hardly its peer for sustained cheerfulness. Her home is the shrine of natural beauty, good sense, and good taste, the very incarnation of comfort. When asked about going to China, she replied, 'I am perfectly satisfied.'

"Bishop Newman gave his opinion of Brother Stevens's appointment to China in the following words: 'It is a good appointment. Brother Stevens is an able young man, earnest in his labors in the ministry, and in every

way qualified for the important duties which will devolve upon him in his new field. I know him well, and I think him one of the coming lights in the Methodist work.'

"The position to which Brother Stevens is appointed is not that exactly of missionary, but as superintendent of the 'Central China Mission,' with headquarters at Wanking, the abiding place of the famous porcelain tower. There has been a mission at that point since 1868, and in the confines of the mission are about fifteen missionaries, and a number of ladies who work in the schools and hospitals under the auspices of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society. The position of superintendent of this important mission is one requiring great executive and administrative ability, and those who are acquainted with Brother Stevens know full well his peculiar fitness."

By the year 1879 others joined the ranks in the Kearney District. E. G. Fowler, frail of body but strong of purpose, with an ambition far transcending his physical endurance, joins the ranks. He was something of a poet as well as preacher, and in his preaching his polished thoughts were clothed in poetic expression. The writer remembers reading a most excellent poem written by him on the occasion of the printing of the entire New Testament in the Chicago *Times*, at the time the new version was first published. He spent several years in the State, filling South Tenth Street, Omaha, Stanton, and other important places, when he transferred to a Western Conference.

William Esplin appears for the first time as a supply on the Ord Circuit in 1879, and is received on trial in 1880. None have been more faithful and efficient through a quarter of a century than this hearty, cheerful, conse-

crated man of God. He remains in the West Nebraska Mission Conference till 1885, when he was transferred to the North Nebraska Conference. His career in this Conference has been creditable in the highest degree, filling some of the most important charges, like Randolph, Hooper, and his present charge, Hirst Memorial Church, Omaha. His pastorates have been uniformly successful, and his good, strong, common sense, his sound preaching and cheerful, pleasant, genuinely sympathetic pastoral work has made him deservedly popular, and he has usually served the full term.

C. A. Mastin is admitted on trial in 1879, being one of a large class of nineteen admitted that year. He is appointed to Minden, and begins a career of great usefulness, which seems yet to promise many years of efficient service. He has been uniformly popular as a pastor, almost invariably serving the full legal term. He was appointed presiding elder of the Indianola District in 1889, and was successful and well liked by all, and might have remained the legal term of six years, but finding the pastorate much more suited to his taste he asked to be relieved of district work, and resumed the pastoral work, being assigned to Lexington. His next charge is First Church, Kearney. He served for several years as chaplain of State Reform School at Kearney, and is now again pastor of First Church. He has been twice honored by his brethren by an election to the General Conference, each time on the first ballot; the last time he was in the pastorate when elected.

He has already given a quarter of a century to the work in West Nebraska. He has long occupied the most important fields, and none have contributed more valua-

ble service in building up that Conference to its present strength.

David Fetz is referred to elsewhere as the zealous local preacher who waited not for the presiding elder, but with another local preacher, Moses Mapes, as early as 1873-74, carried the Gospel to the settlers in Webster and Adams Counties, and was blessed with great revivals. This was not out of any disrespect for the presiding elder, but the need was so pressing that he felt that he must not wait. But he does not have to wait long for the coming of the presiding elder, and we soon find David Fetz taking his place in the regular way, first as a supply in 1878, and then in 1880 he is received on trial along with a class of twelve. Since then his career has been one of constant usefulness, often on humbler circuits, but every year counting for good.

J. M. Dressler appears as a supply on the Plum Creek Circuit in 1878, and has seemed to prefer to remain in the local ranks. He has greatly honored that class of workers, which have seemed of late to be in danger of dropping into a condition of "innocuous desuetude." Few men in the regular work as members of Conference have put in more years of continuous service, or have done better work for the Master, than J. M. Dressler, local preacher. In later years his work has been within the bounds of the North Nebraska Conference, and principally in the Grand Island District.

And last, but by no means least, appears the name of P. C. Johnson, in 1879, as pastor at North Platte. Without doubt he stands next to Dr. Lemon as an influential factor in developing West Nebraska Mission into West Nebraska Conference in 1885.

P. C. Johnson was born in New York, July 14, 1836, and was educated in private and public schools in that city. On the death of his mother, in 1846, he was sent to Perrinesville, New Jersey, where he spent several years on a farm, getting some training from the country schools. He was converted in 1858, and joined the Methodist Church; taught school till the war. Then his patriotism finds expression in a prompt enlistment in the Third Regiment of the Pennsylvania Reserve Corps, was soon at the front, and participated in seven days' fight before Richmond, and was wounded in the head at the battle of White Oak Swamps, and taken to the West Philadelphia Hospital, where he remained over two months and was then honorably discharged from the army in September, 1862, after fourteen months in the service of his country.

He was licensed to preach in 1866, and after serving one year as a supply, was admitted on trial in the New Jersey Conference. After serving several charges in that Conference he was, in March, 1876, transferred to the Nebraska Conference, and stationed at Tecumseh. Of his pastorate here, and of some of the laymen in that Church, he speaks thus pleasantly in a paper read before the Methodist Historical Society, on "A preacher's estimate of some of the laymen I have known:" "There was a class of men at Tecumseh that impressed me very favorably. They were plain men, without any society frippery whatever. They made no pretension—they simply did whatever there was to do. I may mention their names, partly by way of honoring them, and partly that you may, if you care to, know them. Andrew Cook, Joseph Pilmore, John Graff, Robert Robb, and Dr. C. K.

Chubbuck. Others there may be that deserve mention, but I can not recall them now."

Of these laymen he further says: "Andrew Cook was an Englishman by birth, but an American by adoption. Just when he joined the Methodist Church I do not know. His piety was a practical kind and he was not strictly orthodox, that is, to let some estimate his theology. But he was a good man, honest, generous, prompt, liberal in sentiment and sincere in his faith and life. He lived and died a trustful follower of the Master. For a number of years he was a steady supporter, reliable member, and firm adherent of the Church in Tecumseh.

"Joseph Pilmore was also an Englishman. He was a strict constructionist in matters of doctrine, and a rigid disciplinarian. Brother Cook and he were not made in the same mold and they would good naturedly clash about many things; the first suave and courteous, the second, short and pointed, but both good men and honest.

"John Graff was the silent man. He kept his own counsel, did his own thinking, said it in few words—but he always paid his share without a murmur.

"Robert Robb was the old-fashioned Methodist of the lot—an emotional man, ready to cry as occasion demanded, not insincerely, however, for Brother Robb was all heart.

"Dr. C. K. Chubbuck was the manager of the party. His sense, skill, financial and other ability, were often depended on by the others; while they would co-operate with him almost in every plan he might propose.

"Of course there were some others who aided these leaders in their plans and work and made them a success.

It was never in my ministry, mine to see five men who could work together more pleasantly, and harmoniously, and successfully than could these."

After a successful pastorate at Tecumseh, he was stationed at the important Eighteenth Street Church in Omaha, and then after a year at South Tenth Street in Omaha, he goes to North Platte. Here he begins his career of great usefulness in connection with the work in West Nebraska. Of his pastorate here he has this to say in the paper above referred to: "When I went to North Platte, 300 miles west of Omaha, I found a small Church membership almost entirely composed of women. The society had been organized but a little time before. My immediate predecessor was Dr. Edward Thomson. There was no church building—we used the house of the Baptist brethren. There was, however, a small parsonage on the north side of the railroad track.

"Among these women were Mrs. Charles McDonald, Mrs. Joe McConnell, Mrs. Alice Robinson, Mrs. Russell Watts, Mrs. Spoor, and others. I recall the name of but one man, and the mention of it would add no interest to the record, for so far as I can remember, he was noted only for his good-natured uselessness.

"These women were 'the fathers of Methodism' in North Platte, and incidentally of all that region. They did the work, paid the bills, aided the pastor, ran the enterprises of the Church, taught in the Sunday-school, filled the prayer-meetings, and had about all the religion there was in the place.

"The pastor would not have been in it at all had it not been for the women of the Church, for he would have had to move out and seek for work elsewhere.

"A word or two about each of these. Mrs. McDonald was a woman of very fine tastes, deeply pious, and yet withal, she possessed sound, practical sense, and to the extent her health permitted, worked and did her share. She has since died.

"Mrs. McConnell was the leader in almost every department of Church work. She was of petite figure, intensely active, always in earnest, lively and sprightly, possessing a mind and will of her own, never asking anybody's permission either to think or act. She was an intense Methodist, yet not of the shouting kind. She was always in motion and could be relied on for anything within the length of her cable tow. She now lives in Pittsburg.

"Mrs. Robinson was a woman of very practical sense. She was pre-eminently the worker. She collected the pastor's salary, and it was collected, too. She could shame scores of men into shadowy silence, with their miserable cry of 'Can't do it.' She was a woman of kind heart, and generous impulses, yet, if she took a notion to, she would wound her best friends. We soon came to know her, appreciate her excellencies, and love her for her real, solid worth. She was a whole-hearted Methodist and Christian. The story of her husband's conversion is one of the most thrilling I ever knew.

"Mrs. Watts was one of the purest, kindest, truest women God ever made. She was not so pronounced in her manners as some. Not at all demonstrative, but very true, and certain all the same. These were a type of laymen found 'away out West' from twenty-five to thirty years ago. Of all the places I ever served in my ministry, East or West, in the past thirty-nine years, I liked none

better than North Platte. And could I have my way, I would ask for no better set of laymen than were the good sisters of North Platte."

Dr. Johnson was next sent to Grand Island, where he found another Church which had for more than ten years been struggling for existence, but was just ready to emerge out of these conditions of weakness into strength, and power, and influence, that has characterized it since, and he again proves the right man for the place, and does much during his pastorate to secure this much-wished but long-waited-for consummation. He was then placed in charge of the Grand Island District in 1889. In his first report he gives the following description of this district and his year's work:

"Grand Island District occupies the northeastern and northern half of the West Nebraska Mission. Bounded on the south by the U. P. R. R., east by North Nebraska Conference, north by Dakota, and separated from the Kearney District by the Middle Loup River.

"Its territory is large enough for more than forty-five counties of the average size of Nebraska counties, viz: twenty-four miles square, or 16,000,000 acres, and is traversed by the U. P., the Grand Island and North Loup, and the Sioux City and Pacific Railroads. (This territory is larger than three States the size of New Jersey.)

"It contains a population of about from 25,000 to 30,000 persons, and possesses a number of rapidly growing towns, destined to be in the near future towns of considerable importance, a business center of a fine agriculture and stock raising community."

When the General Conference of 1884 established the

line between the North and the West Nebraska Conferences, so that it ran along the west line of Hall County, taking that and Merrick from the West Nebraska Conference, it of course took the main portion of Johnson's district, and he was appointed to the Republican Valley District.

In 1888 Dr. Johnson transferred to the Nebraska Conference, where he has since labored effectively in different pastoral charges, and is now field agent for the Semi-centennial Superannuate Fund.

Dr. Johnson was on the commission that instituted the "Plan of Unification" for our educational work, and has twice been a delegate to the General Conference, from the West Nebraska Conference in 1888, and from the Nebraska Conference in 1900.

These places of high trust and great responsibility to which his brethren have called him are a fair index to the high esteem in which Dr. Johnson is justly held by those who know him best.

It is a matter worthy of special remark that Dr. Lemon not only attracted men in large numbers, but also many of high qualities, of cultured mind and character, as the foregoing sketches make manifest.

As to the number, many were needed, and this sagacious leader found ways of securing them. It will be noticed in the Minutes of 1877 the number admitted on trial was five, and in 1878, four. But at the end of Dr. Lemon's second year, in 1879, the number ran up to nineteen, and in 1880 it was twelve, or thirty-one recruits in two years. A further scrutiny of the Minutes explains the mystery of the sudden increase. Twelve of them are the young men who have rallied around this great leader.

Of the twelve coming up for admission in 1880, five are from this district.

In 1880, the close of the period we are treating, we find that the little band that A. G. White led out into the wilderness had grown under his leadership and that of T. B. Lemon, to a sufficient number of men and charges to lead the General Conference, at its session in May, 1880, to organize the West Nebraska Mission, with twenty-two members, and there were still enough left to constitute the Hastings District with nineteen appointments.

Thus closes the brief story of this marvelous Third Period of our History. How much of all that is highest in human character, greatest in human achievement, have been crowded into these ten years! Almost an entire State has been wrested from the dominion of Nature, populated, and put to the uses of Christian civilization. In all this Methodism has been true to her mission.

CHAPTER XIX.

FOURTH PERIOD. (1880-1904.)

ORGANIZATION OF THE CONFERENCES.

If the retrospect of the achievements of the Third Period tend to make Nebraska Methodists grateful to the Great Head of the Church, these very achievements will keep us busy during the Fourth and last Period. This conquest of a State will make possible, and even necessary, further expansion along many lines, as we shall see.

The first of these will be the speedy organization of two new Conferences. The very large growth of the past has made this a necessity. In the carrying out of that feature of our polity, known as the itinerancy, the Annual Conference becomes the unit of administration. In it are centered the interests, both of the local Churches and of the pastor. Though this is not strictly a function of the Conference proper, but of the appointing power, it is there the Bishop and his cabinet determines the momentous question for each charge as to who is to be their pastor, and for each preacher, what is to be his field of labor to which he and his family are expected to go. It is here the pastor makes his report for the year past and receives his marching orders for the year to follow. It is here that the Annual Conference examines every one of its members, and the bishop asks in open Conference whether there is anything against him. Till this is answered in the negative, the Conference will not pass his

character. Any preacher, or the humblest lay member of the Church may be there, and if they know any reason why his character should not be approved, they may, in due form, say so, and the challenge will be respected and they will be heard. It is there the undergraduates are examined in their studies, and to them the Annual Conference is a theological school, with its four years' course of study, and the usual requirement is that they attain to a grading of seventy out of a possible rating of one hundred. They must pass their examination before committees appointed for that purpose.

Besides these and other legal aspects of the annual gathering, which makes it the imperative duty of each preacher to be there, if possible, it is a most happy reunion of the soldiers in the field, and their wives. Then there is very sure to be the bishop, and a bishop is a very large personage in the eyes of the young preacher. Besides the bishop, some of the strongest men of the Church will be there to represent some of the connectional interests.

For these reasons, every preacher ought to be, and wants to be, and usually is, at the Conference session. But the work having extended over so large an area, to attend Conference will mean for some hundreds of miles of travel and an expenditure of money out of all proportion to the amount received. Hence new Conferences have become a necessity, and will follow in due course.

The first move in this direction is the organization of the West Nebraska Mission, embracing substantially the same territory as that comprised in the West and Northwest Conferences, except that the line came a little further east, taking in Hall and Merrick Counties along the Platte, and Holt County along the Elkhorn.

SOME OF THE FIRST MEMBERS OF THE NORTH NEBRASKA CONFERENCE.

1. J. L. St. Clair. 2. J. R. Gearhart. 3. J. Q. A. Fleharty. 4. C. F. Heywood. 5. C. W. Wells. 6. W. H. Carter. 7. Jabez Charles. 8. John P. Roe. 9. J. M. Adair.

At the session of the Nebraska Conference at York, in 1881, it was decided by vote to make two Conferences of the territory lying east of the West Nebraska Mission, making the Platte River the dividing line running east and west, and the next year the North Nebraska Conference met for the first time on September 14, 1882, at Fremont, and its organization was completed by Bishop Merrill.

We will want to know something more about some of these than their mere names, especially those who have become prominent, and those who have rendered long years of service. There are some with whom we have already become familiar; they have already been mentioned; and some have been characterized.

There is J. B. Maxfield, who has been in the forefront of the battle for the past twenty years, and is destined to be the recognized leader for the next twenty years; then there is Jacob Adriance, whom we have seen laying the foundations of our Zion in two Territories; there is William Worley, whom we have met on the frontier planting Methodism in York County, still hearty and strong for another twenty years; there is S. P. Van Doozer, who led the hosts to victory on the North Nebraska District twenty years before, and is ready for any service to which the Church may call him; there is Daniel S. Davis, whom we saw ten years before unfurl the banner of the cross and set up the standard in Saunders County; there is Jabez Charles, who ten years before laid the foundations of our Zion in Madison and Boone Counties; there is John P. Roe, who, though a supernumerary, by his faithful and efficient labors and generous giving, did more than any other one man to make the present South Tenth

Street Church, Omaha, a possibility; there is E. G. Fowler, with his still frail body, but still eager soul.

Besides these, of whom we have already made more or less mention, there are others who deserve much more than it will be possible to give. But there are some of these who have given so many years, and have occupied places of trust and responsibility, filling them creditably, that they must receive something more than a passing notice. Nor will the fact that some of them are still living and will read with some surprise what is said of them, deter us from more extensive mention of their work. If they be words of censure, may they profit by the same and be thankful for the "wounds of a friend." If they be words of commendation, there will be no impropriety in saying them before they die.

J. B. Leedom is a name known and honored throughout the North Nebraska Conference, where for twenty-eight years he has lived a holy life of entire devotion to the Master, and usefulness to the Church, on circuit, station, and district. He was born in Middlesex, Armstrong County, Pennsylvania, June 1, 1840, and was reared on a farm in a godly home, presided over by a Baptist father and a Methodist mother. He was educated in the common schools, which continued three months in the year. The balance of the time young Leedom worked on the farm till twenty-one. Patriotism led him to enlist in the army, in Company G, Eighty-third Pennsylvania Regiment Volunteer Infantry, and as a part of the army of the Potomac, he helped fight the following battles: Hanover Court-house, Gaines Mill, Malvern Hill, Second Bull Run, and Rappahannock Station. Then in Grant's campaign, from May 1st to September,

1864, in the Wilderness, Petersburg, Virginia, and South Side Road. When the term of enlistment expired, the fag end of the regiment returned to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, where the enlistment roll was made out, and he was returned to civil life.

Surely the above record is an expression of patriotism and heroism that any one might be proud of.

At Pittsburg, in April, 1866, he was united in marriage with Miss Evaline Reynolds, who has been at his side in all his subsequent career as a Methodist itinerant, sharing with him the varying experience of joy and sorrow. Besides being a loyal, helpful wife and wise, devoted mother, Sister Leedom has been a prominent leader along different lines of Church work, but especially in the Woman's Home Missionary Society.

It was two years after their marriage on the 14th of February, 1868, that they gave themselves in covenant relation to God and the Methodist Church.

Brother Leedom was licensed to preach November, 1868, and was received on trial in the Erie Conference in September, 1870. A few years are given to the ministry in that Conference, when, as a result of some correspondence with S. P. Van Doozer, he was transferred to this Conference and began on the St. James Circuit a career of great usefulness, which continues to this day.

They reached their charge in due time and moved their family of six into the small, but neat parsonage, twelve by twenty feet. But if the parsonage was small, he found a large circuit to give him plenty of hard work, something which Jacob B. Leedom always seemed to enjoy, and on which he seemed to thrive. In such laymen as the German Henry Ferber, and the English Henry

Morton and his father; Adam Snyder and his wife, and saintly W. H. Carter, who will himself soon be in the ranks, and that irrepressible local preacher, A. C. Butler, he found a large-hearted welcome and hearty co-operation. Souls were saved during the first year, and his work so acceptable that he is returned. This was a year of great spiritual prosperity, with revivals and conversions, but also of great hardship, on account of the grasshoppers.

Brother Leedom's next pastorate was West Point Circuit, where three years' patient, efficient toil results in strengthening the charge along all lines, and he is rewarded at the Conference of 1879 by his being appointed as the successor of J. B. Maxfield as presiding elder of the North Nebraska District. This appointment was a complete surprise to himself, but later proved a benediction to many others. He served the full term, and during his administration churches were built at a number of places, and the number of charges on his district had so increased that a large portion of the New Albion District was taken from the western end, and still there was left for the writer, who succeeded him, seventeen charges on the Norfolk District, the district having been given that name.

He has since, with a few intervals as supernumerary, on account of broken health, served different important pastorates, among them Eighteenth Street, Omaha, and Central City. He is now the successful pastor at Silver Creek.

Alfred Hodgetts is another name well known in North Nebraska Conference, and indeed throughout Nebraska Methodism and in the Church at large, having filled some

of the most important places. He was a native of Brooklyn, New York, and received his first lessons in religious work in that city, in Talmage's school for lay workers. But he soon found his way to Nebraska with his family in 1878, his first charge being Blair, which he supplied under Dr. Maxfield, then presiding elder.

He is received on trial at the next Conference and appointed to Wisner Circuit, which extended up the Elkhorn, and included Stanton, where he organized the first class. This class did not continue, however. We next find him on the Decatur Circuit, which then included Lyons, where Brother Hodgetts resided, and where he built a comfortable parsonage. Here he remained two years, and was then appointed to Papillion Circuit. We have now reached a turning point in the ministerial career of this young man.

In the Conference at Blair, in 1884, Bishop Mallalieu, recognizing the need of two new districts to take the place of the Albion District, which we have seen was served for a while by the lamented Van Doozer, one to lie along the Platte Valley and be called the Grand Island District, and one to lie along the valley of the Elkhorn and be called the Elkhorn Valley District, and include the contiguous counties on either side of the river and west of Norfolk as far as the eastern half of Holt County. For this new district he selected Alfred Hodgetts.

If ever a presiding elder was sent to a district well nigh empty-handed, it was Alfred Hodgetts. Maxfield had been sent to the new Beatrice District in 1871, with but five men appointed by the bishop. S. P. Van Doozer took with him four when he went on the Covington District in 1871. A. G. White had five given him when he

took the Kearney District in 1873, though only two members of the Conference and one probationer stay with him through the year. But this young man goes to his district of nineteen appointments, and finds that the bishop has appointed but two, one, D. C. Winship, who has just been received into full connection, and J. R. Gortner, who still remains on trial in the Conference. Happily, both these are excellent workers. But this leaves this inexperienced presiding elder seventeen charges for which he must find supplies. True, there are five most excellent men ready to his hand, and appear in the Minutes as if they had been appointed by the bishop. There is that stanch old Methodist preacher, Bartley Blain, who is a supernumerary member of the Minnesota Conference. He has already done some work in Holt County. He is now superintendent of public schools in that county, but will supply Star Circuit. There is Oscar Eggleston, who has just received license to preach, and is ready to enter on his long career as a useful, faithful itinerant, and he will serve Clear Water. Then there is that zealous local preacher, W. H. Burt, who has already done excellent work up in that country, on the Plainview and other circuits, and who will return to Plainview, where he has already done one year of excellent service. Then there is the irrepressible R. Kinne, who has just carried forward to completion a church at Neligh. He will supply the Willowdale Circuit, but will remain but a few months. That faithful, reliable local preacher, Charles G. Rouse, will supply Emerick. Then he will find at Knoxville another local preacher, J. W. Bell, but will soon wish he had not found him and must get rid of him. John Wright will supply Neligh.

But Alfred Hodgetts will still find ten charges for which there are no men visible to serve as supplies. Any presiding elder, however experienced, that takes a district with ten places to be supplied, will be taxed to the utmost to find ten men suitable for this work. True, the appointments are published in all the Advocates, and advertise the fact that he needs ten men. This will be somewhat to his advantage, but will also be a source of great peril to his reputation for wisdom, and to the interests of the Lord's work. Many will at once apply for the places, and among them will be many excellent men. But he will find that almost every ecclesiastical dead-beat in the country is watching for this very opportunity, and will write him. How shall he separate this chaff from the wheat? It will not do to depend entirely on the recommendations sent him. He will find later that there are some of his brother presiding elders in the East and elsewhere, the strength of whose recommendations is in proportion to the worthlessness of the man, and is the measure of said presiding elder's desire to get rid of him. He may, when writing it, have quieted his conscience by the vain imagination that "any one will do for the frontier." Under these circumstances the presiding elder will find himself the subject of opposite sentiments, over against his caution will be his desire to get these vacant places supplied as soon as possible. He will be urged to prompt and perhaps hasty and inconsiderate action by the clamor of the people for a pastor, and will doubtless in some cases be imposed on.

If he is to get good men for these ten vacant charges, it will not be because of the salaries he can promise them. The highest salary reported the year before was $368,

but only one got that much and one reports but $176. Nor will he get much help from the missionary funds, the average per pastor being sixty-two dollars. However great the difficulties, Alfred Hodgetts will soon have nearly all these charges supplied with most excellent men. Some of these he will find among the local and superannuated preachers and others will come from outside.

Though in the nature of the case Dr. Hodgetts must depend largely on supplies during his entire administration, the district made progress under his leadership. At the close of the full term of six years he is appointed to South Tenth Street, Omaha, where he remains three years and has a successful pastorate. In 1893 Bishop Walden appointed him to the Norfolk District, where he served the full term. He is elected to the General Conference of 1896 and is there selected as the representative of the Tenth District on the General Missionary Committee, on which he serves during four years. There are few more responsible positions than this. Besides these positions of trust to which he was called, he was also a member of the Commission that adopted the "Unification Plan," and started Nebraska Wesleyan University out on its career of usefulness and power. He continued a member of the Board of Trustees continuously till his removal from the State, which occurred in 1900, at which time, at the close of a successful pastorate at Trinity Church, Grand Island, he was transferred to the New York East Conference, of which he is now a member. These various places of responsibility to which the Church called Dr. Hodgetts are a sufficient index of his standing, and render unnecessary any further words of commendation.

It will be seen that much of the space given to Dr. Hodgetts is devoted to incidental allusions to his work on his district, and the men who wrought with him. Elkhorn Valley District presented the same phases and had much in common with the frontier districts of the earlier period. But it also presented some peculiar conditions that required some notice. The historian soon finds how difficult it is to treat men in the abstract separated from their surroundings of fellow-workers and events. Indeed, it is impossible. And these subordinate laborers that have received this brief notice are all worthy of much fuller treatment, and one of the unpleasant features of the remaining portion of this history will be the self-denial which the limited space of a single volume will impose on the historian in the treatment of the rapidly increasing number of workers; many of those who come later will not be more than mentioned, if even so much as that is accorded to them. They must wait the preparation of a far more elaborate history of Nebraska Methodism, which the writer sincerely hopes some more competent hand will write in the future.

There is something so unique about this Elkhorn Valley District in the first years of its history, that it seems to demand that we tarry a moment before passing, and note its development and make brief mention of some of the men whom Hodgetts found and who wrought on this hard field the first two years of his administration.

Father C. W. Sackett, a retired preacher of saintly character, will supply Chambers, though he will only receive $7.95 for his work. D. T. Olcott, still known as one of our most consecrated and holy men among our superannuates, whom everybody respects and loves, will

successfully serve Creighton Charge, and will leave a memorial for himself in Olcott Chapel, built at one of the country appointments, and also in the church erected in Creighton.

He will find in Holt County, living on a claim, George P. Bennett, who has for years held high rank in the Des Moines Conference, serving one term as presiding elder. He is glad to do some preaching, and will supply Inman Circuit. He would gladly have relinquished his claim if he could have disposed of it, but jokingly remarked that he was in the same fix as the traditional man who had hold of the bear's tail, and was anxiously waiting for some one to help him let go. Some years afterward he did return to his old Conference.

E. S. Bargelt, a superannuated member of the Upper Iowa Conference, deeply spiritual and still full of faith and old-time Methodist zeal, served Pierce. For Neligh, Hodgetts secured N. H. Gale for the first part of the year. He had come to us from the Presbyterian Church, and was a pure man and an excellent, scholarly preacher. But the infirmity of deafness increased to such an extent that he was compelled to retire from the pastorate and was employed as financial agent of the new Nebraska Central College. His place at Neligh was soon filled by J. W. Phelps, a transfer from the Rock River Conference. J. W. Phelps was a mixture of strange contradictions. He was possessed of a personal magnetism which gave him remarkable power in the pulpit. Few men could sway an audience more powerfully than could he. Vast crowds attended his ministry, and in a few months Neligh Charge was marvelously advanced. This same magnetic power gave him a strange influence over many in

his personal intercourse. Such was his phenomenal success at Neligh, that when at the next Conference at Ponca, in 1885, a man was needed to succeed Dr. Maxfield on the Omaha District, no one seemed so well fitted for the place as J. W. Phelps, and Bishop Andrews appointed him. For two years he seemed to be carrying everything by storm. Never had such quarterly-meetings been known in that part of the State, and the district was soon ablaze with enthusiasm. But alas! as is sometimes the case with these strong men, a vein of weakness existed on the moral side of his nature. He was tempted to place his great personal influence, resulting from the prestige of his office, and also from his great personal magnetism, at the disposal of a mining stock corporation, and become agent for their fraudulent, worthless stock, inducing many preachers to invest. In two years his brilliant career on the Omaha District closed in shame and disgrace, and he resigned and went to California.

The two men appointed by Bishop Mallalieu to circuits on Dr. Hodgetts's District are well worthy of further notice.

Dugald C. Winship had chosen the honored and highly useful profession of a physician, and was succeeding admirably, having become skillful in his chosen life work. He had located in Bennett, and built up a practice worth at least $1,000, or more, a year, with excellent prospects of even larger success and larger income in the future. He afterward resided a year in Oakdale, Nebraska, where he practiced his profession. But the call to preach had become so clear that it had reached the point where, with Paul, he was constrained to say "woe is me if I preach not the Gospel." But this could hardly

be without a struggle. He already had a little family around him that looked to him for support. Could he afford to relinquish his income of $1,000 or more, as a physician, to accept less than $500 as a Methodist itinerant? Not a few of our most successful pastors have been confronted with just such a problem. John P. Yost, at North Bend, Nebraska, was serving as postmaster on a salary of $1,200 a year, and resigned and entered the ministry, accepting a charge that paid $300. D. W. Crane, presiding elder of the Kearney District, was train dispatcher on the Union Pacific Railroad, and was one of the best in their employ, receiving $1,700 with an almost certain prospect of speedy promotion with much larger pay. But when the conviction of duty became clear, he turned his back on these brilliant worldly prospects and cheerfully went to a charge that did not promise to pay more than $400.

I speak of these cases, not because they are exceptional, or more worthy of note than many others, but as illustrations of the fact that as a rule Methodist preachers have not been attracted to the ministry from mercenary motives, but almost invariably have entered it from a sense of duty, attracted, not by large salaries, but by large opportunities of usefulness and impelled by the conviction that God had called them, and that it therefore became their imperative duty.

This was certainly the case with D. C. Winship. He was admitted on trial in 1882, and was sent to Wayne, which included Wakefield, rival towns just springing up on the new railroad running from Sioux City to Norfolk. The year before, 1881, W. H. Carter had organized a small class at Wayne, and Josiah Fowler had formed an-

other at Wakefield. These were the first classes formed at these places. Winship took his family of five to Wayne, but finding no place to live, and little encouragement, he accepted the offer of Wakefield to reside there, they agreeing to build a parsonage. This they proceeded to do as far as possible, but only one room could be made fit to live in, and from January until spring that small room must serve their family of five for kitchen, bedroom, dining-hall, parlor, reception-room, and study. Besides the parsonage, a good church building was erected during Brother Winship's pastorate, and Methodism well established at Wakefield. To support himself and wife and three children he received less than $500.

Brother Winship's next charge was Wisner, a circuit of four appointments, and his pastorate here was attended with some revival interest.

When, at the next Conference, D. C. Winship's name was read out for Niobrara, Brother Leedom came to the writer, who had become Brother Winship's presiding elder, and demanded, with no little indignation, why I had sent Winship there, saying it was an outrage. But there had come a great change in Niobrara, by the coming of a wealthy and devoted family, Brother C. D. Chipman and wife, and I felt sure the time had come to send them a strong man, and felt sure they would take care of him as they had promised. The event proved that I was not mistaken. Though he only found twelve members, he was blessed with a great revival, breaking up vicious amusements, and resulting a large number of accessions, among them M. W. Barnum and wife, the latter the daughter of Brother and Sister Chipman. As an expression of gratitude for this last result, Sister Chipman

came to Brother Winship saying she had promised the Lord if He would save her son-in-law, and bring his family into the Church, she would build a parsonage. The parsonage was built and good Sister Chipman drew her check for $650 to pay the bill. As for support, Brother Winship was promised $500, and received $556, fifty-six dollars more than was promised, and more than he had yet received. Though Brother and Sister Chipman were soon removed by death, M. W. Barnum and his devoted wife remained for many years the mainstay of the Church, which even after Dr. Winship's pastorate remained a fairly comfortable charge, served by some of our best men.

Brother Winship next went to O'Neil, where he succeeded in saving the Church, which was having a life-and-death struggle against the predominating Catholic influence there, which has always made it difficult to maintain our position. After this hard year, during which the wing of the church building was fitted up for a parsonage, he and his family had a pleasant pastorate of two years at Oakdale, where he had received license to preach a few years before. Then to Stanton, where, during a pastorate of three years, he had gracious revivals and cleared the property of debt. Then a year at Old Dakota City, and then to First Church, South Omaha, where more than one hundred souls were converted, and a floating debt of $1,200 paid off.

But Brother Winship's outspoken opposition to the vices of the city brought on him the wrath of the saloon power. He did not realize his personal danger until he was waited on in the parsonage by a big ruffian, who talked so abusively that Dr. Winship made a move to put

him out, when he was confronted with a big knife. It is a great wonder that he came out of the affray alive. The would-be assassin was immediately arrested, and admitted that the saloon men had sent him to "do up the preacher." But he was made to pay so dearly for his amusement that it is not likely that he has ever been induced to attempt to "do up" a preacher again.

Brother Winship was secretary of the Conference for many years, was elected delegate to the Ecumenical Conference at Washington, and was once elected reserve delegate to the General Conference.

He went to Colorado, where he spent several years in and around Denver, in the meanwhile educating his children at Denver University, returning to Nebraska in 1890, since when he has served Trinity Charge, Grand Island, and is now pastor at Central City.

During Dr. Hodgetts's administration he inaugurated the district camp-meeting at Oakdale, which continued to be for fifteen years the scene of many great gatherings, and resulted in many great spiritual victories; as high as one hundred souls were converted at some of them. Besides the interest of successive presiding elders and the pastors of the district, this success was due in no small measure to some choice laymen, among them A. J. Leach and others, of Oakdale, and J. H. Barns and Monroe Whitmore, of Cedar Creek.

We must pause a moment to note the pathetic close of the career of S. P. Van Doozer. It was fitting that he who played so large a part in making the North Nebraska Conference, as pastor, but especially as presiding elder of the Covington, or rather, North Nebraska District, should be among those who should help to organize the

North Nebraska Conference. After a year on the Papillion Circuit, where he built a church, largely by his own labor, he is again summoned by the authorities of the Church to district work on the frontier, and is assigned by Bishop Wiley to the new Albion District, lying west of the Norfolk District. The writer was at the same time assigned to the Norfolk District, and we both found it convenient to reside at Norfolk.

Brother Van Doozer seemed yet the very picture of robust health, and as between us, gave much fairer promise of long life than I did. But he threw himself into the work, as was his wont, with his whole soul, not sparing himself. This is something S. P. Van Doozer never seemed to think of doing. But he was greatly enjoying his work, and was in the midst of plans evolved during the first quarter, when with startling suddenness the news came that he was stricken down with disease while on his way to his quarterly-meeting, and in a few days the sad intelligence came that at Fullerton, at the home of Brad Slaughter, to which his devoted wife had been hastily summoned, S. P. Van Doozer "ceased at once to work and to live."

I have had occasion to refer to the work of this rugged, stirring, consecrated man of God, because no history of Nebraska Methodism would be complete without noting the great contribution he made in various ways to the making of that history.

His brethren of the Conference put on record the following memoir, prepared by his comrade in the Lord's work, J. B. Maxfield:

"Rev. S. P. Van Doozer, presiding elder of Albion District, North Nebraska Conference, and reserve dele-

gate-elect to the last General Conference, died at Fullerton, Nebraska, January 16, 1884. Concerning the exact date of his birth we have no certain information. He was a native of New York, and about fifty-eight years of age. He graduated at the Michigan State University, and attended the Garrett Biblical Institute. Soon after he removed to Missouri and was engaged in our educational work for a time. Brother Van Doozer married in 1871, Miss Sarah E. Malloy, who, with two interesting sons, survives him. As a preacher, Brother Van Doozer was sound in his theology, Scriptural in presenting salvation on the terms of the Gospel, 'Repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.' That school of the prophets, Garrett Biblical Institute, had taught him that our theology is a complete system, compact, harmonious, strong, and all-sufficient. He was clear and forcible in setting forth the momentous themes relating to man's moral estate and eternal happiness. His flock was fed upon solid truth rather than vapid sentimentalism. He built many churches, often with his own hands, when help was lacking, which frequently was the case. He was a wise builder of living stones into Christ's spiritual temple. To many throughout these borders his memory 'is as ointment poured forth.' He was the intimate friend and co-worker with the gifted and sainted White, of our Nebraska Conference, to whose sudden death his own decease presented such a striking and painful parallel. He was a Christian hero. He was a wise counselor. He was a devoted husband and a kind, affectionate father. The world has been made richer because he lived, the Church poorer because he died."

J. M. Adair spent many years in the work in Ne-

braska, and was one of our most faithful men. Besides serving some important charges, among them Plattsmouth, it was he who laid the foundations of our Church at South Tenth Street, Omaha, as early as 1872. He bought a small church of the United Presbyterians, and "displayed commendable zeal, both in the city and country, but received for his services scarcely enough to pay house rent," says his presiding elder.

Josiah Fowler transferred to this Conference from Michigan in 1876, when he was advanced in life and somewhat broken in health, and while a most excellent preacher, and faithful pastor, was never appreciated at his full value by the people. He served some of our best charges, among them Dakotah City and Fremont, and was highly respected by all who knew him. But his retiring disposition was not well fitted to the rush and push of the Western life. He was permitted to give a third of a century to the gospel ministry, eight of which were spent in Nebraska. He died at his home in Dixon County, in 1889. Three of his sons have entered the ministry, and are now members of the North Nebraska Conference.

Other names connected with this first Conference are worthy of mention. Among the most saintly of men is W. H. Carter. We have already met him on the St. James work, where he was converted at a camp-meeting at Lime Creek, under S. P. Van Doozer's administration, and at once becomes an active supporter of the pastor. In 1878 he is received on trial, and gives many years to the work in Nebraska. He is the first to organize the work in many portions of Antelope and Knox Counties in 1879. He is said to have been "a typical pioneer

preacher, spending most of his time in the homes of the people, and traveling from place to place carrying the message of divine truth." It was he who first organized Methodism in Wayne, and many other places. He is still a highly respected superannuated member of the Conference, but some years ago, his health failing, he removed to the coast, and is now residing in Washington.

Then there is steady-going, faithful J. R. Gearhart, who has given many years to the ministry in Nebraska. He was received on trial in 1880, and appointed to Madison, and afterward served in succession St. James, Wakefield, Humphrey, Coleridge, and other charges. He is now an honored superannuated member of the North Nebraska Conference and resides with his family at University Place.

J. Q. A. Fleharty entered the work in Nebraska in 1874, being received on trial and appointed to Iron Bluffs that year. The next year he has all Polk County, and with his Bible, hymn-book, and a few clothes stowed away in a pair of saddle-bags, he spends most of the time in the saddle. He builds the first church at Wesley Chapel appointment, and has a revival at Osceola, at which over one hundred are converted. Among those converted were the county judge, sheriff, and constable; and J. H. Mickey, now the honored governor of Nebraska, was among the most active workers during the meeting. North Bend, Columbus, Harvard, Madison, where he builds a parsonage, and Oakdale, are among the charges he has served, on many of which God blessed his labors with gracious revivals, and he has received over 500 probationers while in the ministry.

While at Madison, 1881, he was married to the now sainted Ella A. Woodman, "whose desire was to die in the work." After twenty years as a faithful wife and intelligent worker in the Church, she goes to her reward on the 18th of October, 1901.

Brother Fleharty is now a superannuated member of the North Nebraska Conference, and resides in Omaha.

Charles F. Heywood saw not a little of life before entering the Methodist ministry, having practiced law, served a term in the Nebraska Legislature, and was for some time a minister in the United Brethren Church. He comes into our work with a good equipment of natural ability and a large experience with men and affairs.

He is received on trial in 1880, and goes to Niobrara, and the next year is appointed to Norfolk. Here he purchases two lots for a church, and that he wisely selected the location is the verdict of all subsequent pastors and presiding elders. With a little handful of members he proceeded to erect a church, and by doing much of the work himself, he succeeded in inclosing it so it could be used. C. F. Heywood may be said to be the first to give Norfolk Methodism a permanent place in the community. His next pastorate is Madison, where he remains two years, doing excellent work. Then at the Conference in Ponca, in 1885, just after that great calamity in which the new church they had erected had blown down, C. F. Heywood was selected to meet the emergency. His ability as a preacher soon commanded a large congregation, and his careful management of the difficult problems brought the Church through the crisis in good shape. He has given twenty years of efficient service in the effective ranks, but was compelled to take a superannuated rela-

tion in 1901, and now resides at Central City, greatly respected by all who know him.

Another name that has become well known in Nebraska is that of J. W. Shenk, D. D. Born at Coblesville, New York, January 20, 1842, and converted at the age of fourteen, he began preaching at the age of sixteen. After graduating at Garrett Biblical School, he joined the Central Illinois Conference and was sent as a missionary to Buenos Ayers, South America. But failing health soon compelled him to relinquish that work and he returned in 1867. He was transferred to the Nebraska Conference in 1878. He served in succession the important stations of Seward, Fremont, Eighteenth Street, Omaha, and was six years on the Grand Island District. While he had a good measure of success in all of these responsible positions, his chief distinction grows out of his relation as editor of the *Omaha Christian Advocate* throughout its eventful history. As that enterprise will be treated in another portion of this history, it only needs at this time to mention the fact that Dr. Shenk was once elected delegate to the General Conference and twice elected reserve delegate. He was also a member of the Commission that located Nebraska Wesleyan University at Lincoln.

J. W. Stewart's name appears among the first members of the North Nebraska Conference, but inasmuch as he only served two pastorates, First Church and Tenth Street Church, Omaha, in this Conference, nearly all his ministerial work in Nebraska being in connection with the Nebraska Conference, it might be more proper to mention his work in the portion of this history relating to that Conference. But after all, every Methodist

preacher, in some large and important sense, belongs to the whole Church, and is equally at home everywhere.

Then there is quaint old Father Janney. He had been preaching for half a century before the North Nebraska Conference had its birth, and began his ministry before most of its members were born. He preached his first sermon in that historic Foundry Church, in Washington, D. C., and was ordained deacon by Bishop Soule, in 1832. He was of Quaker parentage, but was converted at a Methodist camp-meeting near Washington, D. C., and joined the Methodist Church, but retained through life some of the Quaker traits.

He was nearly sixty years of age when he began his work in Nebraska, but he shrunk not from some of the hardest service. After serving De Soto and Fontenelle, he was sent to the Wood River Circuit, 150 miles west, the point farthest west of any circuit in the State. He is already on the superannuated list, but we are glad to reckon him among the charter members of the North Nebraska Conference.

After a life of over seventy-five years and a ministry of over fifty years, he passes on to his well-earned reward, departing this life April 11, 1887.

J. L. St. Clair is well worthy of mention among those who helped to organize the North Nebraska Conference and has done much to develop it into its present strength. He came to us from the United Brethren, among whom he had been a leader for years, and was one of their best preachers, as he was afterward one of our best preachers. He would command large audiences wherever he went, and always left his mark on the charges he served, in the way of accessions, or some substantial advance in

the way of a church building, or parsonage, or both, for Brother St. Clair had a penchant for economizing means and space by partitioning off the rear end of the church for a parsonage. This was the case at West Point and Albion, at each of which places he built a church. At Columbus he gave our Church its first permanent foothold by the erection of a fine church. His career has been one of uniform success. He tarries with us, but is doubly afflicted with defective eyesight and hearing.

Of the probationers in Conference at its organization, besides those already mentioned, are two well worthy of mention. E. L. Fox was one of these resourceful young men that will make their way anywhere, and that people can not help but like. His few years in Nebraska were very successful, and he is just the man for the difficult mission he is carrying on in New York City.

Another probationer whose subsequent career justifies further notice is J. B. Priest. Brother Priest is a native of Iowa, but came to Nebraska in the later seventies, and settled in the neighborhood of St. James, where he taught school for some years, and where he was married to Miss Carr, who has proved a helpmeet indeed.

Brother Priest is another one sent down to Conference from the old St. James Charge, and was admitted on trial at the first Conference in 1882. J. B. Priest has been a popular pastor from the first, being a good preacher, an industrious, sympathetic pastor and skillful, resourceful manager of the affairs of a local Church. His first circuit is Ponca, where all these qualities will be in urgent demand throughout his entire pastorate, which continued the full legal term. This first pastorate is typical of all his subsequent ones, in that it brought into action

those qualities that have made him a pronounced success wherever he has been sent in the last twenty-three years. He found Ponca in a very low state, spiritually and every way, but a great revival, in which he was assisted by a Brother Wendell, an evangelist from Iowa, gave the society a fresh start along spiritual lines. The revival, however, has so increased the number in Church and congregation, that a new church building becomes a necessity, and under the wise and stimulating leadership of this young probationer, speedily becomes a possibility, and a little later, through the self-sacrificing efforts of pastor and people becomes a reality, in the erection of one of the best churches in North Nebraska Conference. The future seemed bright with hope for the Ponca Church and plans for aggressive work along all lines in the new church were being laid, when suddenly, early in June, a terrific wind storm tore their new temple to pieces, blighted their hopes, and defeated their plans, or seemed to. To make matters worse, the Conference had accepted their invitation to hold its next session at Ponca in the new church. A few days after, when the writer, who was then presiding elder of the district, suggested to Brother Priest that we might have to change the place of holding the Conference, the indomitable pastor said, "No; we need the Conference more than ever." That was one of many cases where the pastor was wiser than the presiding elder, for the Conference met in Ponca and the Methodist preachers came to the rescue of the stricken Church by pledging $500 to aid in rebuilding. With this help the brave society rebuilt under the wise leadership of C. F. Heywood.

It will suffice to say that in all the important charges

he has served, such as Norfolk, Lyons, South Tenth Street, Omaha; Central City, Albion, Randolph, and Blair, this faithful preacher and tireless worker has been successful. He has for years been secretary of the Conference, and is yet in the prime of life.

John P. Roe is one of the ablest preachers we have ever had in Nebraska. He came to us originally from the Episcopal Church. He was born in England and reared in the Church of England, and coming to America, he naturally became a member of the Episcopal Church and remained such till converted in a Methodist revival, when he seemed instinctively to find his way into the Methodist Episcopal Church, of which he has ever since been a stanch defender. He was licensed to preach, and served as chaplain during the war. He returned from the war and served several pastorates in the Wisconsin Conference. But probably the greatest service he rendered the Church in Wisconsin was as financial agent of Lawrence University, our Methodist school at Appleton. He succeeded in relieving it of a burdensome debt, and greatly strengthened it financially.

He took a supernumerary relation in the Wisconsin Conference, and came to Nebraska in 1875, residing in Omaha. Here he soon after lost his wife, a most accomplished lady, characterized by a deep and intelligent piety. Brother Roe served South Tenth Street two years, as noted elsewhere, and also Seward and Crete, and at each of these places his ministry was attended by large congregations, and his strong, faithful sermons made a deep impression on the community.

But perhaps his greatest service in Nebraska was when, as elsewhere related, during his pastorate at the

little mission church on South Tenth Street, Omaha. It is not too much to say that during the first year he saved the struggling society from bankruptcy by giving his entire salary to pay their debt, and the next year made it possible for them to build their present church by donating his salary to the building fund.

John P. Roe is a man with somewhat peculiar traits not often understood by the casual acquaintance and only a few know him sufficiently well to appreciate his true nobility of character. He is still residing in Omaha. In 1881 he was married to Miss Cattell, an English lady with whom he became acquainted during his pastorate at Seward. Sister Roe is a true Christian lady, of great force of character, and is devoting her energies to the task of ministering to her husband, who is rapidly failing in strength. Brother Roe is among the honored superannuated members of the North Nebraska Conference.

There is one more name that well deserves mention. J. R. Gortner came to Nebraska in 1882 and settled on a homestead in Holt County. He was at once employed as a supply by Dr. T. B. Lemon, though he had come to Nebraska to rest and recuperate, his health having become impaired in Illinois. In 1883 he was admitted on trial in the Nebraska Conference, but was transferred in 1884 to the North Nebraska Conference, and was one of the two men appointed by Bishop Mallalieu to places on the new Elkhorn Valley District, being sent to Inman.

While serving faithfully and efficiently on the frontier for several years, J. R. Gortner's chief distinction lies in the fact that he felt himself distinctly called of God to the mission work in Africa, under that Pauline leader, Bishop William Taylor. So, with his devoted wife and

two boys, John Narver and Ross, he was sent to the chosen field in the fall of 1887. There are few more pathetic stories in the annals of missions than this brief account furnished by his son, Rev. J. Narver Gortner, who for years has been a successful minister of the Gospel in the North Nebraska Conference. He says:

"My father was stationed by Bishop Taylor at Garraway. Later he was made presiding elder of the Cape Palmas District. He died the following March. I was alone with him when he died, my mother being unconscious at the time. The next day I assisted certain colored men in tearing down a partition in the mission house and making two coffins, one to bury the remains of my father in, and the other to bury the remains of Mrs. Meeker, a missionary lady who had died the day before. A few months later my mother and I, accompanied by my younger brother, Ross, returned to America."

Though like Melville B. Cox, the first missionary to Africa, J. R. Gortner in a few months fell a victim to the dread African fever, this makes him none the less worthy of all honor for the spirit of self-sacrifice that made him willing to give his life, if not his service, to redeem Africa. And the spiritual redemption of Africa should ever be an object of special interest to Nebraska Methodism, seeing one of our number lies buried there.

There are a few other names, but they are those who remained only a few years among us and went to other fields.

CHAPTER XX.

FOURTH PERIOD. (1880-1904.)

The five years from the formation of the West Nebraska Mission, in 1880, have witnessed such marvelous growth as to justify the organization of the West Nebraska Conference, in 1885, the General Conference having passed an enabling act to that effect. Dr. Lemon, in his last report as superintendent of missions, gives this glowing account of the general situation in that part of the State:

"Towns have sprung up, centers of trade formed, and the once desert plains are becoming the most fruitful and promising parts of our State. We have within our mission lines about thirty counties organized, and much valuable unorganized territory, while Cheyenne, Sioux, Keith, Cherry, and Custer Counties are large enough to make at least ten other counties." That the Church has kept pace with the increase in population is seen in the fact that the districts have increased from one to three, the appointments from twenty-two to sixty-one, and preachers, including probationers, from twenty-three to forty-seven. The membership, including probationers, has increased even more, advancing from 1,329 in 1880, to 3,895 in 1885, or nearly threefold. These figures are based on the face of the statistics as they appear in the Minutes. But the net gain will be seen to be even greater, if we note the fact that thirteen of the best charges that

were a part of the Mission Conference, have become a part of the North Nebraska Conference. This is only partially offset by a few that came from the Hastings District to the mission in the readjustment of lines by the General Conference of 1884. Had the boundary lines remained the same as in 1880, the additional increase would have been four hundred, or more.

They have also been building churches. Dr. Lemon speaks, in his reports, of having dedicated seven churches in a single year. In 1880 there were seven, and though by the change in boundary lines they have lost five, they still were able to report sixteen, making a net gain of fourteen.

Thus this army of conquest has been pursuing its triumphant march to the western line of the State, with Presiding Elder Johnson in command of the southern wing along the Republican, and the old commander, T. B. Lemon, leading the center column along the Platte, and the northern portion under the leadership of George W. Martin, has extended along the Elkhorn and to the northwest as far as Chadron. They have about completed the conquest of all this vast territory, comprising over 40,000 square miles, or about two-thirds of the State.

Having attained in every way to the proportions of an Annual Conference, there is little wonder that many should feel that the time had come to avail themselves of the enabling act of the last General Conference, and erect themselves into Annual Conference. On this they voted, and without a single negative, West Nebraska Conference became a fact, the bishop concurring in the action, and starts out on its career of power and useful-

SOME OF THE FIRST MEMBERS OF THE WEST NEBRASKA CONFERENCE.

1. Joseph Buckley. 2. J. A. Badcom. 3. T. W. Owen. 4. Bartley Blain. 5. Jepthah Marsh. 6. W. H. Wheeler. 7. Charles Reilly. 8. Wesley Wilson.

ness. The reader will want to know the names of those who constituted this body of brave men:

Amsbary, W. A.	Greenlaw, A. L.	Randolf, R.
Boswell, G. M.	Hale, C. A.	Scamahorn, J. A.
Buckley, J.	Johnson, P. C.	Smith, E.
Campbell, C. E.	Lemon, T. B.	Smith, M. W.
Carr, J. S.	Mann, J. M.	Stevens, L.
Collins, A.	Martin, G. W.	Taylor, W. M.
Cooper, C. S.	Mastin, C. A.	Thurber, T. H.
Eddleblute, L. H.	Owen, T. W.	Vessels, W. G.
Ellsworth, D. M.	Pierce, M. R.	Webster, T. C.
Glassner, W. O.	Pitchford, W. J.	Wilson, W. C.

ON TRIAL.

Badcon, J. A.	Durham, J. P.	Howell, E. W.
Calder, F. H.	Ferguson, G. O.	Kleeberger, J. A.
Castle, M. A.	Fulmer, C. E.	Mount, E.
Chapin, A. B.	Friggens, R. H.	Robinson, R. L.
Cox, C.	Gray, J.	Thomas, F. F.
Crandall, C. C.	Helm, J. Q.	Wheeler, W. S.

It will be seen that the number on trial continues to be relatively large. This has been the case since the second year of Dr. Lemon's administration on the Kearney District. In the meanwhile the transfers are also growing in number. Dr. Lemon seemed to have a genius for finding good men and attracting them to this hard field and keeping them here.

But we should know something more about some of these than their names. While many of those who were present when the Mission was formed were mentioned in

that connection, there are some new names well worthy of further mention.

As early as May, 1871, Asbury Collins took a claim and he and his family made their home in Kearney. He and his family are of those to whom religion is a necessity, and Church fellowship essential to the religious life of the individual, and the best moral order of the community. So they were hardly settled in their new home before he wrote to the presiding elder, A. G. White, that "there are some stray sheep out here that need looking after." But A. G. White, whose district extended from Omaha toward the west as far as there were any settlements along the Union Pacific, was unable to come till the next October. Sister Collins, in speaking of this visit says, "Our hearts leaped for joy at the first sight of our presiding elder, who was truly a man of God, enduring great hardship for Christ's sake."

Rev. Asbury Collins.

The result of that visit of the elder was the organizing of a Methodist Church, the first of any denomination in Kearney, and is thus related by Sister Collins: "The evening after the elder arrived our little band assembled to listen to an able sermon by him. Then assisted by my husband, the first society was organized. Charter members: Rev. Asbury Collins, Louisa E. Collins, H. E. A. Sydenham, Alfred Gay, Hannah Jay. Mr. Collins was then appointed pastor of the little flock at Kearney, with instructions to look after newly-forming settlements."

Thus, in the home of Asbury Collins, Kearney Meth-

odism took organized form and has steadily grown in power and influence under successive pastors who have served her, until now there are two flourishing societies, First Church, with 330 members, and C. A. Mastin, pastor, and Trinity with 109, of which J. G. Hurlburt is pastor. The little class of five has multiplied till the total number of Methodists in Kearney is 439.

This same Asbury Collins, a few months after the class was formed, organized the first Sunday-school, and in 1900 helped lay the foundation of Trinity Church.

Brother Collins had spent many years in the itinerancy in Iowa before coming to Nebraska, and having been trained in that school of aggressive Methodism, was no novice in the work. He united with the Iowa Conference as early as 1846, and continued in the work till compelled to desist on account of hemorrhage of the lungs. He asked for a location and came to Nebraska, hoping to find relief. At first he only consented to accept a pastoral charge temporarily, fearing his health would not hold out. But he did much work in and around Kearney, organizing classes and circuits, and turning them over to others as soon as some one could be found.

He was permitted to give nearly twenty years to the work in West Nebraska, filling some important places, taking about 1,000 people into the Church, and building eight churches. He dedicated the first church in Custer County, which was of the then prevailing type of the first churches, being constructed of sod. However, the doors, windows, and necessary lumber were drawn by wagon from Grand Island and Kearney, a distance of fifty miles or more.

An incident which well illustrates the character of

Brother and Sister Collins, and the difficulties of church-building, occurred while the Church at North Loup was being built during Brother Collins's pastorate at that place. At one time during its erection a point was reached where forty dollars were needed, and without which the work could not go on. But all had given to the utmost of their ability, and so far as any human resource was concerned, it seemed to be unattainable. Brother Collins said to his wife, "Let us take this matter to the Lord," and on their knees they pleaded with God for the forty dollars needed. Brother Collins went out in town as usual, and soon found a man who gave him the forty dollars, and he came home with a radiant face to report to his wife the wonderful answer to prayer.

Brother Collins was received into the Nebraska Conference on his certificate of location from the Iowa Conference, and was one of the charter members of the West Nebraska Conference. He served a number of pastorates, among them Chadron, 300 miles from Kearney, his home. The journey to this far-away circuit must be made by private conveyance across a vast stretch of bleak prairie. Yet at the advanced age of sixty-one, or more, these two made this long journey. The Lord seemed to have prepared the way for them, for at one place which they reached late in the evening, very weary with a long day's ride, they found the housewife already at work making down a bed on the dirt floor of her single-room dug-out, having been moved to thus prepare for her guests in advance by a strong impression that some weary traveler would certainly come that night seeking shelter.

Brother Collins was for all these years a friend, companion, and counselor of such men as A. G. White and

T. B. Lemon. He closed his career March 9, 1890. His brethren placed upon their record the following appreciation of his life and character:

"Rev. Asbury Collins was born in Ohio on October 25, 1823, and died in Kearney, Nebraska, on March 9, 1890. Brother Collins was converted on February 19, 1841, and at once united with the Methodist Episcopal Church. He was soon after licensed to preach, and in 1846 he was admitted on trial into the Iowa Conference. Iowa was then the extreme frontier; and as a pioneer preacher, through almost incredible toil and privation, he helped to lay the foundations of Methodism in that State. After many years of itinerating, his health failed, and for a long time he was laid aside because of hemorrhage of the lungs. In 1872 he located on a claim and became the first settler on the site of the city of Kearney. In his home the first religious service was held, also the first sermon preached, the first Sunday-school, Church Society, and class-meeting organized. Brother Collins was the first class-leader and pastor in Kearney. In 1852 he married Louisa Fletcher, at Iowa City, Iowa, who survives him. They were called upon to pass through bitter trials. In 1875 their oldest son, Milton, was shot by drunken cowboys, and fell dead in his wife's arms at his own door; and in 1882 the only remaining son, Finley, was killed by the accidental discharge of a gun in the hands of a friend.

"In 1881, at the request of Dr. Lemon, Brother Collins began to do outlying mission work, and in 1885 was readmitted to the West Nebraska Conference on his certificate of location, and died in the active work. Brother Collins was of mixed English and German extraction,

and possessed in a large degree the impulsiveness of the latter race. This characteristic was at once his strength and his weakness. It led him to throw his whole soul into whatever he undertook. In his business and social relations it carried him to the front. In his Christian and ministrial life it made him peculiarly useful and successful. It made him a soul-winner and church-builder. Over a thousand accessions to the Church were the result of his nine years' labors in the West Nebraska Conference, and seven churches built under his leadership stand as monuments to his energy. In his disposition Brother Collins was kind and sympathetic, and in social intercourse very pleasant. He was a warm friend, true as steel, and loyal as a man could be. His religious experience was keen and bright, his trust was full and complete, and his life well rounded out."

Mrs. Louisa Collins, the devoted wife of Asbury Collins, still tarries among us, and the preachers of the West Nebraska Conference affectionately call her "Mother." And well they may. For nearly forty years she was at the side of her husband, in all his years of toil, not only as a companion, but as one of "those women that helped in the gospel." Besides the ordinary duties of a pastor's wife, she would, on occasion, fill the pulpit in his absence, and such occasions were not unfrequent in those days. Since her husband's death she has devoted herself to the interests of the Woman's Home Missionary Society. For some years she was corresponding secretary for that Conference, but extended her labors to portions of the older Conferences, organizing many auxiliary societies.

In 1888 she was elected president of the West Ne-

braska Woman's Home Missionary Society. Though feeble now her heart is still warm and she loves the dear old Methodist Church, but is waiting for the time of her transfer to the Church triumphant.

W. A. Amsbary reappears in the work in Nebraska after an absence of nearly twenty years. His is a familiar name in the early days of Nebraska Methodism, when he was a power for good. His subsequent career is detailed in the following just tribute which his brethren of the West Nebraska Conference put on record after his useful career had closed by his sad death: "Rev. W. A. Amsbary was born of Methodist parents in Oshua, Canada West, December 14, 1834; came to Ohio at the age of six years, and settled with his parents in Lorain County. Moved to Berea, Ohio, in 1847, and was a student in Baldwin Seminary from 1849 until the spring of 1855, at which time he moved to Nebraska and lived with his parents on a farm north of Omaha. In 1857 he was married to Miss Hattie Diffin. He was licensed to preach in 1860 by the Quarterly Conference of Florence Circuit, Rev. Hiram Burch in charge. He was admitted to travel the same year, and served Tekamah, Bellevue, and Plattsmouth Charges with marked success. In 1867 he was transferred to Colorado and served Central City and Georgetown. The blessing of God richly attended his labors upon these charges. Brother Amsbary located in 1868 and for several years did not have charge of a work. At the request of Dr. Lemon, of blessed memory, Brother Amsbary returned to Nebraska in 1884 and enjoyed a good year at Ord. The next year he was stationed at Gibbon, then at North Platte. These were years of success both for the Church and pastor. The following year,

1887, Brother Amsbary was appointed presiding elder of Sidney District." Of this period Brother Amsbary writes: "This year was one of clouds and sunshine. Traveled nearly 11,000 miles, preached over 300 times, beside other labors. This year little four-year-old Frank died, to the memory of whom (with his sister Villa) is dedicated one of the rooms in Nebraska Wesleyan University, Hon. Frank Grabb paying $100 and the district paying the rest."

Brother Amsbary served the district faithfully until his death. He was just closing up his sixth year in this capacity, and was on his way to Big Springs in the discharge of his duties on the morning of the 11th of the present month, when the fatal accident occurred which terminated the useful life of our beloved brother, and brought great sorrow to the hearts of all the members of this Conference.

James Lisle is one of the most scholarly men the West Nebraska Conference has had in its ranks. But without a vigorous body he has been content with the more modest appointments, on which he has always done efficient work. But he has devoted much time to scientific research, and is a frequent and interesting contributor to our Church periodicals. After many years in the work in Iowa, he came to Nebraska, settling on a homestead near Long Pine in 1885, his name appearing that year as pastor at Stewart. He becomes a member of the West Nebraska Conference in 1887 by transfer from the Des Moines Conference, and has since been in the active work as far as his health will permit. He is now Conference secretary for the semi-centennial celebration of Nebraska Methodism, and the Jubilee Conference Claimants' Fund.

T. W. Owen was among the first to respond to Dr. Lemon's call for men after he came to the Kearney District, and in 1878 is appointed to Indianola Circuit. This was two years before the Burlington and Missouri Railroad was built up the valley of the Republican, and everything was new. Brother Owen built the first frame house south of the river, and west of Arapahoe, which was included in his circuit, all the other settlers living in the primitive sod houses. The river was not yet bridged, and had to be forded. There were no church buildings and the pastor must preach in sod houses or in the public halls, court-houses, or any place available.

Only a few years before this the Republican Valley was the hunting ground of the Indians, where great herds of Buffalo ranged, and the Indians were still troublesome. About this time a band of warriors passed through that country, killing some of the settlers to the south of there, and stealing horses and destroying property. Brother Owen went to one of his appointments, but instead of Sunday-school and service he found in the neighborhood a crowd of terrified settlers, with arms, and their camp surrounded with wagons to protect women and children from an attack by the savages, which was momentarily expected, but happily did not occur.

After seven years' faithful work on circuits along the Republican, which included such places as Arapahoe, Indianola, Cambridge, Wilsonville, Beaver City, Bartley, Republican City and Alma, where he laid the foundations of our Zion, he passed to the north side of the State, where we find him at Ainsworth, Johnstown, and other places, building churches, holding revivals and in all other ways extending the borders of our Zion.

Brother Owen, like all the preachers on the frontier, found the people poor and unable to give him much of a support, yet he found in some of the sod houses people with diplomas from our educational institutions, and musical instruments, and other tokens of superior culture and refinement. He is still in the work, stationed at Riverton in the Republican Valley, near the scenes of his first experiences in the Nebraska work.

Rev. James Leonard came into the Mission Conference just as it was changing into an Annual Conference, but the character of the work he has wrought since calls for this brief reference: He was born in Ohio, January 18, 1842. He was admitted on trial in the North Indiana Conference. He is transferred from that Conference to the West Nebraska Conference in 1885. His first charge was Indianola, and the second one was Beaver City. Then Curtis, Wallace, Ord, and Gibbon are served in succession, when in 1893 he is appointed presiding elder of the North Platte District.

In this important field he soon becomes very popular. His sympathetic and genuine interest in his preachers soon won their hearts, and his care in all the details of the circuits and stations won the confidence of the people. We are not surprised that his brethren in the Conference should express their appreciation by electing him reserve delegate to the General Conference of 1896, and a delegate to that of 1900. Brother Leonard was on the Commission that established our Nebraska Wesleyan University, and has been a member of the Board of Trustees almost continuously since. Of later years he has been a successful Conference evangelist, but is now serving Lander, Wyoming, as pastor.

O. R. Beebe is another of the strong men who, though not coming into the Conference till 1887, rendered long and efficient service in building up the work in West Nebraska Conference. He has since 1887 given his entire time to a number of the most important pastorates in that Conference, and has been recognized as a leader among his brethren. He has for many years served as a member of the Board of Trustees of Wesleyan University, and was twice a delegate to the General Conference. A stroke of paralysis necessitated his taking the superannuated relation in 1903, and he is now residing in University Place.

Rev. O. R. Beebe.

Joseph Buckley was among those who wrought in this field throughout almost the entire history of the Mission, his name appearing for the first time as supply on the Clarksville Circuit, as early as 1882, and has continued through many years of effective service on many a hard field. He is one of those choice spirits who, at the time of enduring the greatest hardships, making the greatest sacrifices, and even exhibiting a high degree of real heroism, are unconscious of doing anything but plain simple duty for Christ's sake.

He remains to years at Clarksville, where he improves the church property, and then goes to Alma and Republican Circuit, where he remains two years, and then to Axtell and other circuits in succession, till compelled to relinquish his work and enter the ranks of the superannuated, in 1902, which relation he yet sustains, honored by his

brethren as one of the fathers of the West Nebraska Conference. He was born in England in 1840, and was well along in life before entering the work in Nebraska, but by faithful work he has done much in laying the foundations in this new world.

As a result of this change to an Annual Conference, Dr. T. B. Lemon's official relation as superintendent of missions ceases and the old commander, after a year as presiding elder of the Kearney District, lays down his commission and retires from all active participation in the affairs of West Nebraska Methodism. But his work is done, and well down. For eight years he has been permitted to lead the hosts from victory to victory, rapidly extending the borders of our Zion. He has seen the "little one become a thousand." He may already say, with Paul, at least with reference to his mission in West Nebraska, "I have finished my course." He has been marvelously preserved for this very work, which has been the crowning work of a long ministerial career, marked by great success at every period. The event has proved that Bishop Bowman made no mistake when, in 1877, he sent this old hero to this important field, though it might have seemed otherwise to him and his friends at the time.

His friends, whose "name is legion," will not allow their beloved leader to retire from this scene of battle and victory, without placing on record some words of appreciation, as seen in the following resolutions:

"Whereas, The Rev. T. B. Lemon, D. D., for a considerable time presiding elder and superintendent in what is now the West Nebraska Conference, is at this time broken in health and suffering bodily pain.

"*Resolved,* That this Conference desires to assure Dr.

Lemon of its continued love and earnest sympathy with him in his distress and its prayers for his speedy recovery. The Conference desires further to assure Dr. Lemon that it does not for one moment forget his eminent services, his great and long continued labors in behalf of the Church he has done so much to plant on firm foundations in Western Nebraska, and his fatherly care for those whom the Church has placed under his direction.

"*Resolved,* That while God calls our beloved brother who has so long served Him in earnest activity, now to a service of patient suffering, he is affectionately assured that our hearts will follow wherever he may be called to go."

As noted elsewhere, Dr. Lemon was permitted to take an influential part in the great work of organizing our present educational system, being a member of the Commission, and as financial agent of Nebraska Wesleyan University during the first years of its existence rendered good service in rallying the forces to its support. But increasing infirmity was bringing his long and useful life to a close. The end came February 19, 1890, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. C. F. Maynard. His brethren of the North Nebraska Conference, to which he had been transferred, place on record the following brief résumé of his life work, and appreciation of his worth, written by his comrade, J. B. Maxfield:

After referring to matters already mentioned in other pages of this book, Dr. Maxfield continues: "In 1888 the North Nebraska Conference requested the bishop to transfer Dr. Lemon to that body, which was done. He was a member of the General Church Extension and Missionary Committees for several terms. He was a mem-

ber of the General Conference in 1872 and 1880. These, and all other positions of responsibility and honor entrusted to him by the Church, he filled with credit to himself and fidelity to the cause whose interests he served. The first meeting of Dr. Lemon with myself was at Nebraska City in 1861. Here began a friendship which continually increased until the time of his death—nearly one-third of a century later. Before time had bowed his commanding presence and shorn him of his strength, Dr. Lemon was a fine specimen of symmetrical manhood; the expression of his countenance was very attractive and he possessed a voice of great flexibility and wonderful compass. His speech was chaste and fluent, and his words chosen with rare good taste. In his prime, his sermons were rare specimens of pulpit oratory, of which any preacher of the Church need not be ashamed. He was a sound reasoner, a correct thinker, who brought rare native endowments with gifts of rich culture to the service of the Master whom he loved and served. He came to his grave like a shock in its season, in the midst of nearly his entire family, composed of his companion in the kingdom of patience of Jesus and his fellow-pilgrim to the skies, his four children—two daughters and two sons—and their children; three generations about the bedside of the mighty man of God, departing from their midst to the home in the skies to await their coming. Surely the 'chamber where the good man meets his fate is privileged above the common walks of life.' Dr. Lemon's life was grand and useful, his death tranquil and sweet as the falling to sleep of a babe on its mother's breast, without pain, in the full possession of his faculties. 'He was not, for God took him.' "

CHAPTER XXI.

FOURTH PERIOD. (1880-1904.)

But we are not yet done with that form of expansion expressed in the organization of new Conferences. Developments in the West continue, especially in the northwest portion. It began as early as 1882 under the administration of T. B. Lemon, when the Mission Conference included all of Holt County. Two appointments, Middle Branch and Inman, appear in the Minutes for 1881, and these and two others, Keya Paha and Long Pine, in 1882. These are circuits, and embrace more than the places named. Inman includes Atkinson; Long Pine includes Johnstown. Of the general situation in that part of the State, the prospects, and the difficulties encountered, are thus set forth in Dr. Lemon's report for 1882: "These roads are opening up the country and bringing large settlements along the different lines, and the valleys and divides bordering on them. Towns are being built at the different stations and divisions; and new charges are needed to be formed and men secured to fill them and do the great work Providence is opening up before us along the frontier. The different branches of the Church are putting men and large means, from their Missionary treasury, all along these lines of road and pushing out into the rural districts and organizing Churches with an earnest zeal and liberality of means, which shows their faith in the future of this country."

Dr. Lemon is still in charge of the whole field, with thirty-three charges scattered over nearly the entire western two-thirds of the State. To visit his farthest appointment, Long Pine, requires 300 miles of travel. Yet Dr. Lemon visited that portion of his district in person, and years after, when the writer was presiding elder, and had the eastern portion of Holt County in his district, there were still many with distinct and pleasant memory of those visits.

But in 1883 the whole number of appointments had increased to forty-five, and twenty-three of the eastern and northeastern appointments are set off and the Grand Island District is formed, with P. C. Johnson as presiding elder. The number of circuits up along the Elkhorn Railroad have increased to ten.

Prior to the meeting of the Mission in 1884, a session of the General Conference had intervened and had done two things of great interest to the Mission. It had so changed the boundary lines of the older Conferences as to run on the west line of Webster, Adams, Hall, and through the center of Holt County on to the north. By this change the Mission gained five appointments from the Hastings District and lost thirteen from the central and northern portion, these going to the North Nebraska Conference. The other action of interest was the passage by the General Conference of an enabling act, authorizing the Mission to resolve itself into an Annual Conference.

Notwithstanding the loss of thirteen charges, as stated in Dr. Lemon's report, there were still enough left to form three districts, the Republican Valley, with P. C. Johnson presiding elder; Platte Valley, in charge of T.

B. Lemon; and the Niobrara Valley, with George W. Martin presiding elder.

By 1886 Dr. Martin has enough charges up along the Elkhorn to constitute the Long Pine District, which now embraced settlements as far west as Chadron, there being fourteen charges in the district. The Elkhorn Valley Railroad is now completed as far west as Chadron and towns are springing up all along the line.

George W. Martin, who, since 1884, has as presiding elder led the hosts during this rapid development along the northwest portion of the State, came to the Mission in 1882 and was employed by Dr. Lemon to fill out the unexpired term of A. H. Summers, at Kearney, the latter having gone to California. Of Dr. Martin's pastorate at Kearney, Dr. Lemon speaks these words of commendation: "We were fortunate in obtaining the services of Rev. George W. Martin, of the Central Illinois Conference, who brought a most valuable ministerial experience to Kearney and to our Mission, and his labors at Kearney prove him to have been the right man in the right place. Brother Martin has collected and paid off an old debt of $545, clearing the charge of all indebtedness, and they have contracted for the building of a parsonage at a cost of $1,500."

Dr. Martin was returned to Kearney in 1883, and in 1884 Bishop Mallalieu appointed him to the Niobrara Valley District.

He found in the north part of the State one church building and a few towns scattered along the line of the railroad, beginning with Atkinson, with that holy man of God, D. T. Olcott, as pastor, building up the Church, and extending as far as Gordon, where the old veteran from

Indiana, J. A. Scamahorn had already lifted up the standard. There is an indefinite circuit called White River, which was doubtless intended to include the settlements in the region where Chadron now is. That was left to be supplied, and Joseph Gray, a recruit from Pennsylvania, is sent to that farthest outpost.

This may be said to be the Northwest Nebraska Conference in embryo. But it is to be fortunate, like so many other portions of our frontier work, in having some of our strongest, wisest men to superintend the laying of the foundations, and it will rapidly advance in its march towards the goal of a full-fledged Annual Conference, which it will reach in a few years.

But perhaps no period of its growth was more rapid than during the incumbency of George W. Martin, and at no time was more careful oversight required than during these years when the completion of the Elkhorn Vallay Railroad to the Black Hills attracted an immense immigration to the country contiguous to the line. Classes must be formed, circuits organized, churches and parsonages built, and men must be found willing and capable of bringing these things to pass. This required no little executive ability and alertness on the part of the presiding elder, but George W. Martin seemed equal to the occasion, and our work made fine progress under his administration. He starts out with nine appointments on the north part of his district, and turns over to his successor fifteen organized charges. Instead of one there are nine churches and one parsonage.

After leaving the district Dr. Martin is appointed to the important station, North Platte, and afterward was for some years chaplain of the Reform School at Kear-

ney. He was on the Commission that located Nebraska Wesleyan at Lincoln, and has since been transferred to the Nebraska Conference, where, besides several pastorates, he has served as chaplain of the penitentiary. He now resides in Lincoln, and is prominently connected with the Prison Reform Association

Indiana Methodism is to furnish the two men, T. C. Webster and A. R. Julian, who are to wisely and vigorously carry forward the work in the northwest part of the State, so well begun and efficiently executed by T. B. Lemon, P. C. Johnson, and George W. Martin, and the faithful Blains, Gortners, Olcotts, Owens, and others equally true, who wrought under the leadership of these men.

We pause to note the large part that Indiana Methodism has played in the history of Nebraska Methodism. While nearly every Northern, and some Southern States have made their contribution of noble ministers and men and women in the laity, it can not but have been noticed that Indiana has done in some ways what no other State has done. It was Indiana Methodism, which had commanded the services of a Simpson and Bowman, in her educational work and then gave them, along with her stalwart Ames to the Episcopacy, that also gave their equal in many respects, W. H. Goode, in 1854, to lay the foundation stones of Nebraska Methodism. And a few years later, in 1858, gave us H. T. Davis to continue the work on the foundation and give forty-four years effective labor on the superstructure. Who may compute the value of the labors of these two men alone? But these are not all. It was in Indiana that J. B. Maxfield united with the Methodist Church, and received his commission

from on high to preach the Gospel, though it was not till after he came to Nebraska that the Divine call was formally recognized by the Church which licensed him to preach and admitted him into the traveling connection in 1861, and for over forty years furnished him suitable fields for the employment of his great powers. Then later we have Leonard and Beebe and Vessels pushing the battle in West Nebraska. Others might be mentioned, but these few choice spirits, along with Webster and Julian, will be sufficient to bear us out in the statement that the contribution of Indiana to Nebraska Methodism has been unique in the character of the workers and the value and extent of the influence exerted.

T. C. Webster.

T. C. Webster came to us from the Northwest Indiana Conference, being transferred to the West Nebraska Conference in 1885, and after filling some important pastorates he, in 1887, succeeded Dr. Martin on the Northwest District, which had changed its name every year up to that time, and is now called the Chadron District. This has become an immense district, extending from the west line of the North Nebraska Conference, which runs through the center of Holt County, to the west line of the State, and is about 300 miles long, and of varying width, from 100 miles on the eastern portion to the towns along the railroad in the western portion. Everything is still new, and there is much work to be done in organizing new charges and building churches and parsonages. Of these the churches

increase in number from nine to twenty, and parsonages from one to ten during Webster's administration; the number of appointments from fifteen to twenty. In the western portion the district has broadened so as to take in Alliance, Box Butte, and Hemingsford, and Marsland along the B. & M. Black Hills and Billings Line. The membership, including probationers, has about doubled, increasing from 888 to 1,618 in the same time.

During the Conference year of 1890-91, T. C. Webster finds the work on the district too hard for his frail body, and that he is breaking down, and must relinquish the district work. The magnificent results show that he has not spared himself, but has successfully led the hosts of workers during his incumbency, and turns the district over to his successor well organized and well manned.

He then joins the ranks in the North Nebraska Conference and successfully serves Walnut Hill and South Tenth Street, in Omaha, and Lyons, Trinity Church, Grand Island, Central City, and Schuyler, where he is now in his second year. He is the secretary of the Semi-Centennial Celebration and Conference Claimants' Fund for the North Nebraska Conference.

A. R. Julian, who has been pastor at Deadwood, in the Black Hills, succeeds T. C. Webster on the Chadron District, and so successfully carries on the work that by 1892 the number of appointments have increased to twenty-seven.

Territorially, the district is isolated to such an extent that it has become a great hardship for nearly all the preachers to reach the seat of Conference, involving as it does 150 to 300 miles travel by private conveyance, and there being no line of railroad running north and south,

except at Crawford on the west, and Norfolk on the east, the distance for most of them is even greater by railroad, being from 200 to 450 miles to any point along the Union Pacific Railroad. Of men whose average receipts are about $350, and none much above $600, this sacrifice should not be required any longer than necessary. And the growth under these successful leaders, and the efficient work of the pastors had gone on, until all the conditions seemed to imperatively demand that the privilege accorded by the enabling act of the General Conference be accepted. This was done at Kearney, Nebraska, in 1892, when the following resolution, introduced by C. H. Burleigh, was adopted by a vote of fifty-nine to two:

"Whereas, An enabling act was granted by the last General Conference to the West Nebraska Conference to divide itself into two Annual Conferences, the presiding bishop concurring in this action, and

"Whereas, We believe the most favorable time for such action has come, in order to facilitate the work of the Church within this large territory, therefore,

"Resolved, That we divide our territory and organize a new Conference, the boundary line of division to be as follows: Commencing on the east line of the Conference where the said line crosses the south line of Holt County, and thence west along the south line of Holt, Rock, Brown, Cherry, Sheridan, Box Butte, and Sioux Counties to the west line of the State of Nebraska. That portion of this Conference lying north of this line to be known as the 'Northwest Nebraska Conference.' The interest of the new Conference, as to missionary appropriations and otherwise, to be preserved. Signed,

"Charles H. Burleigh,
"James Lisle."

Thus the fourth and last of the Annual Conferences came to its birth, as the result of ten years of development, brought about by the wise leadership of Lemon, Johnson, Martin, Webster, and Julian, and the faithful work of many efficient men who wrought on this hard field, some of them throughout the entire period. These names are worthy to be put on record, and are as follows, as they appear in the Minutes at the first session of the new Conference at Alliance, in September, 1893:

Austin, H. H.	Elkins, T. J.	Moore, O. T.
Balch, T. C.	Foutch, M. S.	Ramsey, O. L.
Baker, O. S.	Gammon, R. H.	Rorick, E. E. E.
Beck, S. A.	Gettys, J. R.	Scamahorn, J. A.
Burleigh, C. H.	Glassner, W. O.	Smith, C. F.
Davenport, R. J.	Julian, A. R.	Snedaker, G. P.

PROBATIONERS—FIRST YEAR.

McCullough, John W.	Connell, Charles E.
Kendall, John W.	Clark, Darwin J.

Pucket, William T.

Many of these are worthy of fuller treatment than the mere mention of their names, but the writer's efforts to secure the requisite data have failed, and only a few can receive any further notice than this record of names, and that very briefly.

A. R. Julian, who is the son of a Methodist preacher, has been the recognized leader of this band since 1891, and has served six years as presiding elder. Without doubt, his district, 300 miles long and extending eighty miles southeast from Crawford along the B. & M. R. R., involved as much travel in the course of the year as any

FIRST MEMBERS OF THE NORTHWEST NEBRASKA CONFERENCE.
1. C. E. CONNELL. 2. A. B. CHAPIN. 3. C. F. SMITH. 4. W. O. GLASSNER. 5. O. L. RAMSEY. 6. T. C. BALCH.

district we have ever had in Nebraska, and probably more. To make the work still harder, the single passenger train that ran each way on the Elkhorn Road ran in the night in that portion of the route, so that much of the travel must be done at night, except the few trips that might be made on freight trains in the daytime.

About the time the Northwest Nebraska Conference was born, and A. R. Julian began his hard six years of work, the conditions began to change for the worse, making progress more difficult, if not impossible, in many parts of that territory. The preceding "seven years of plenty" were to be followed by "seven years of leanness." A succession of dry seasons brought partial and sometimes complete failure of crops. Notwithstanding these adverse conditions the report made at the end of his term by the presiding elder shows during this six years "we had 2,800 conversions and additions. During this period our population has decreased at least one-third. With decreasing population we have doubled our membership, and we have sent out of the district more than a thousand members to other societies. We have built fifteen churches and eleven parsonages. We have raised and expended on old debts and for building and improving churches and parsonages $32,700." At the close of his term it was deemed best to make two districts, the Long Pine and Chadron, manned by those two old veterans, both in their country's service, and in the Lord's army, P. H. Eighmy and J. A. Scamahorn, both of whom have just closed their full term. Brother Eighmy was elected a delegate to the General Conference at the last session of their Conference.

After retiring from the district in 1887, Brother Julian served a term as superintendent of public instruc-

tion of Dawes County, and after serving two pastorates he has again been summoned to district work, succeeding P. H. Eighmy on the Long Pine District. D. J. Clark succeeds Brother Scamahorn on the Chadron District.

Brother Julian has twice been elected delegate to the General Conference, the second time while he was a supernumerary, something that so rarely occurs that it shows in special manner the high esteem in which he is held by his brethren. He has been for many years an influential member of the Board of Trustees of the Nebraska Wesleyan University. He is still in the prime of life and gives promise of many years of usefulness.

Charles H. Burleigh was transferred from the Southwest Kansas Conference to the West Nebraska Conference in 1888. He has given five years to the West Nebraska Conference before the division, and is a charter member of the Northwest Nebraska Conference, in which he has been in the pastorate from its beginning. He has served some of the most important charges, built churches and parsonages wherever needed and it was possible, been blessed with many very gracious revivals, and by his thorough business-like method, has contributed as much to the success of the work in that part of the State as any other pastor. He seems to be a born secretary. He had not been long in the West Nebraska Conference till he was elected secretary and continued at that post till the organization of the Northwest Conference, and that Conference has had but one man for secretary, and that man is Charles H. Burleigh.

Stephen A. Beck, after a few years of successful work on pastoral charges, was sent as a missionary to Korea,

and is in charge of our publishing establishment at Seoul, the capital of the kingdom.

D. J. Clark began his ministerial career the same year the Conference was organized, and has grown with its growth, filling the pulpit at Chadron and other important fields, and is now presiding elder of the Chadron District.

W. O. Glassner was born in 1833, and entered the ministry in 1858, and after many years in the active service in the western part of the State, is now a superannuated member of the Northwest Conference, greatly beloved and honored by his brethren.

The conditions referred to in connection with A. R. Julian's six years on the district have continued in full force nearly ever since, precluding any material progress. For the last five or six years they have held their own, the membership being slightly in excess of what it was when Julian closed his first term on the district. For the last year, however, there has been many indications that better conditions are in store for both State and Church in that part of the country. The people are coming to understand the soil and the climate better, and there are plenty of opportunities for successful farming and stock raising, which combined, becomes quite profitable. People are again settling in that part of the State, and Methodism in the Northwest Conference is on the field, organized and enthusiastic, and ready for the new era of progress.

This completion of the organization of the four Conferences marks the limits of expansion in that direction, as there will probably never be more needed in the State.

CHAPTER XXII.

FOURTH PERIOD. (1880-1904.)

THUS we have traced the expansion of the Church until it has covered the entire area of the State. We have found that organization has kept pace with the expansion. The little class in the Morris settlement in Cass County was the first to be organized. But others quickly followed, necessitating the forming of circuits, stations, and districts; and, finally, as the population extended, and the area occupied became greater, the evolution of the four Conferences has been the natural result of the growth of a live evangelistic Church.

These Conferences will henceforth have charge of the territory assigned them, and supervise the further development and organization of the Church within their bounds. Their work will have much in common and their progress will be under the same general laws of spiritual growth, requiring the Divine power of the Holy Spirit to guide and make effective the consecrated human agencies.

But while much will be in common, each Conference will, in subordinate ways, have its own problems to solve, its own peculiar conditions, which will favor or retard the progress of the work, and though the workers in each may be characterized by the same zeal, consecration, and capacity, the progress in some will perhaps be greater than in others, as conditions may be more or less favorable. So, if in the farther tracing of the history in the

different sections of this State we find that some of these Conferences have made greater progress than others, it will be attributed to these varying conditions, and not be deemed to indicate any less fidelity in the workers in any one of the Conferences. Our Lord Himself found the conditions such at Nazareth that "He could there do no mighty work."

As a matter of fact it will be found from now on that the natural conditions in the eastern portion of the State, occupied by the older Conferences, will be much more favorable than in the western portion. The experience of the years has made it plain that while much of the western portion is rich in soil, it belongs to the semi-arid belt, where the rain fall from year to year is not sufficient for reliable farming, and the material growth of that section has not kept pace with the eastern. However, during this last period, the West Nebraska Conference has made commendable progress and even the Northwest Conference, where the conditions have been least favorable, has made some progress.

This last period will witness the rapid growth of the large cities, and the establishment of new churches in eligible locations. Omaha has grown from 30,000 in 1880, to a little over 100,000 in 1900. The census of 1890 gives the population as 139,000, but what many suspected at the time was clearly shown to be the fact by the census of 1900, that the census of 1890 was padded to the extent of at least 50,000. This is now acknowledged by all and is regarded by some of the best men in Omaha as having been a criminal blunder, which has reacted disastrously. They are now convinced that honesty is the best policy, even in census matters.

SOME WHO HAVE LED THE HOSTS AS PRESIDING ELDERS.

1. H. Hirst Millard. 2. Stokely D. Roberts. 3. R. H. Adams. 4. Wm. R. Jones. 5. Richard Pearson. 6. D. F. Rodabaugh. 7. W. A. Amsbary. 8. J. G. Miller. 9. Asa C. Sleeth. 10. J. R. Gettys. 11. George W. Elwood. 12. W. K. Beans.

But the increase from 30,000 in 1880 to 100,000 in 1900 is a substantial gain, and has necessitated a corresponding expansion of our Church. We have seen Seward Street Church taking the place of the old Eighteenth Street Church, and South Tenth strengthening its position by building a church in 1880, and a parsonage in 1881. Seward Street has had a healthy growth under a succession of energetic and able pastors, numbering such men as Wm. Worley, C. W. Savidge, D. K. Tindal, A. C. Welch, C. N. Dawson, and Wm. Gorst. It now numbers 444, as compared with 142 reported for Eighteenth Street Church in 1880.

South Tenth Street began the period with seventy-two and now has one hundred and thirty-one. Thus this Church has made some progress, but not equal to what we anticipated. It has been well and faithfully served by such men as J. W. Stewart, E. G. Fowler, T. C. Clendenning, C. N. Dawson, Alfred Hodgetts, J. B. Priest, T. C. Webster, G. A. Luce, and the present pastor, A. L. Mickel. These have all been efficient pastors, and some most excellent lay workers, such as Luther A. Harmon and his father, Mrs. N. J. Smith, David Cole, and others, who were in the Church at the first and were joined by others who came in later.

In 1886 H. H. Millard, D. D., organized Hanscom Park Church. This Church occupies one of the very best portions of the city, and has the field to itself, being far enough away from any other Methodist Church to prevent any conflict of interest. It has also been favored by a number of aggressive laymen, prominent among them being John Dale, a local preacher and business man.

Brother Millard was very successful, and at the end of

the year reported a church worth $8,000, and a membership of ninety-four. It now has a fine church worth $33,500, a parsonage worth $2,500, and a membership of 352.

The appointment of H. H. Millard to Hanscom Park Church (which was to be) by Bishop Fowler, in 1886, is a good illustration of the embarrassment to which a presiding elder is sometimes subjected. The writer was at that time presiding elder of the Norfolk District, and had secured Brother Millard from Drew Theological School, and he having done two years of excellent work at Wisner, I wished very much to keep him. Bishop Fowler, seeing a splendid opportunity at Hanscom Park, was looking over the Conference for the best man for the place. Millard had been suggested, and the bishop proceeded to question me in regard to the young man. To tell the truth about him was to lose the man I needed, but being a little proud of him, I told the whole truth, after which the bishop quietly said, "We will put Millard down for Hanscom Park."

Brother Millard's successors were George M. Brown, who remained five years; W. P. Murray, who staid five years; F. M. Sisson, who after two years was appointed presiding elder of the Norfolk District, and Clyde C. Cissel, who is now on his fifth year. It is a credit to this Church that they have so uniformly kept their pastors a long term, and these pastors have evidently been doing good work rearing this goodly superstructure on the foundations so well laid by H. H. Millard.

In 1883, the country where South Omaha now stands was open farm land, but about that time was purchased by packing-house interests in Chicago, and in a very brief time there was the beginning of the now thriving city of

South Omaha, with a population of 25,000 or more. Of course, Methodism will seize this important point, and in 1886, T. B. Hilton, who had previously served Fremont and York, was assigned to "Omaha Circuit." At the end of the first year the statistics show thirty-eight members, and one church worth $32,000, and a parsonage worth $1,800. But this is manifestly an error, as the amount reported the next year was $3,800 for the church and $600 for the parsonage, which is correct.

L. H. Eddleblute succeeded Hilton, and during the two years of his successful pastorate began and inclosed a more commodious church building. The writer followed Eddleblute and found that his work had been well done. During my pastorate the Church begun under my predecessor's administration, was carried forward to completion, and dedicated by Bishop Newman. I found some splendid laymen, who co-operated heartily in the work. Among these were Young, Mead, Eastman, and Richardson. Chief among these was the last named, who as president of the Board of Trustees, Sunday-school superintendent, class-leader, and steward, proved himself a valuable helper and true friend to the pastor. There were others who were helpful, but whose names are not recalled. At the close of the first year I was appointed presiding elder of the Elkhorn Valley District, and C. N. Dawson followed. His pastorate continued five years, and was very successful. During his term the church burned down, and he successfully led the people through the difficult task of erecting on the same site a much better one at a cost of $15,000. Under Dawson and his successors, J. A. Johnson, H. H. Millard, and M. A. Head, all strong men, the Church has made steady progress,

SOME WHO HAVE LED THE HOSTS AS PRESIDING ELDERS.

1. Thomas Bithel. 2. Isaac Burns. 3. A. G. White. 4. C. W. Giddings. 5. J. S. W. Dean. 6. J. F. Kemper. 7. D. J. Clark. 8. Martin Pritchard. 9. S. P. Van Doozer.

and the thirty-eight reported by Hilton have increased to four hundred.

Omaha extended rapidly toward the north during the eighties, and presented an inviting field to Methodism, which was promptly entered, and in 1887, Trinity Church began its eventful career. The church is located in the addition known as Koontz Place, in which no lot was sold to any one that did not agree to build a house worth $2,000.

T. B. Hilton was the first man to preach in that vicinity with a view to establishing a Church, but remained but a short time, when J. E. Ensign, who had something of a reputation as a financier, was employed to solicit subscriptions. But a failure to secure a guarantee of $1,200 salary caused him soon to retire, not being the kind of man needed. A. H. Henry was transferred from Castellar appointment in the south part of the city, where there was little promise, to this much more promising field. Trinity thus had the somewhat novel experience of having three pastors before there was any Church organized.

But Henry was an energetic, bright young man and soon found the following persons who were on the 13th of November, 1887, organized into a class and took the name of Trinity Church: M. M. Hamlin and wife and three children, Ed. A. Parmelee and wife, Mrs. Norah H. Lemon, C. W. Cain and wife, and Stella Cain; J. J. McLain and wife, J. J. Toms and wife, L. A. Harmon and wife, O. T. Smith and wife, H. H. Miller, Mrs. F. B. Brayton, J. H. Cornes, C. D. Simms and wife, Elizabeth Hamilton, Edward Bell, wife, and family; Mrs. Willett, Mary Willett; Kittie Snow and Kate Elsas.

Encouraged by a generous subscription of $500 from Rev. John P. Roe, the amount deemed needed to make it safe to do so, was secured, and a good substantial church was built at a cost of $17,000, and dedicated by Bishop Newman.

Succeeding A. H. Henry was J. W. Robinson, and he and his successor, W. K. Beans, added to the Church till the membership had increased to 269. F. H. Sanderson follows W. K. Beans, and remains five years, reporting at Conference in 1898, 228 members. Thus in its first ten years it grew into a strong Church numerically, but when Jesse W. Jennings, who had been appointed to Trinity, reached his field, he found a discouraged people almost ready to give up the struggle and acknowledge that they were bankrupt. Trinity was one of those enterprises that had the misfortune to start out at the wrong end of the boom, and before they could get their finances in good shape, the boom burst and made it difficult to collect old subscriptions, or secure new ones. But Brother Jennings is something of a genius in church finances, and after a year of determined effort, he, with the heroic co-operation of the membership and friends, succeeded in raising the debt and saving the property. After two years he was placed in charge of the Omaha District, and is followed at Trinity by H. H. Millard, who after a year became presiding elder of the Grand Island District, and D. K. Tindal goes to Trinity, and was followed by J. R. Smith, who is now pastor. The Church has progressed under these faithful, strong men till now the membership is 385.

Walnut Hill Church first appeared in the Minutes in 1891, as "Wesley Chapel," and is left to be supplied. The

Church was organized January 4, 1891. The first members were Mr. and Mrs. F. L. Cotton, Miss Mattie Mason, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Johnson, Miss Eunice Stanardt, Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Stonecypher. The charge was temporarily served by John P. Roe, John Dale, and others, and D. F. Rodabaugh held a revival meting of two weeks. Fortunately, just at this juncture, T. C. Webster, who had, as before mentioned, been compelled to relinquish his work on the Chadron District on account of ill health, was available, and was appointed to this infant Church in June, 1891.

Happily at this time the Hanscom Park Church, having outgrown their first building, and were under the necessity of erecting a larger one, generously donated their old church to the struggling society, and it was moved and served a second time as a place in which to shelter and nurse an infant Church into maturity of power and influence.

T. C. Webster was reappointed at the next Conference and remained two years. He found seventeen members and left one hundred and ten. He found not a penny worth of property, and left a property valued at $6,000. T. C. Clendenning and J. E. Moore followed in succession, serving one year each, and the membership increased to 159. C. N. Dawson is next in succession, and remained five years, and the membership increased to 305. G. A. Luce and George H. Main, who is the present pastor, round out the list of pastors who have made Walnut Hill Church, as it is now called, one of the most influential in the city. A fine parsonage has been added to its property, and it is rapidly becoming one of the most desirable charges in the city and has a fine field for future growth.

SOME WHO HAVE LED THE HOSTS AS PRESIDING ELDERS.

1. D. W. Crane. 2. J. E. Moore. 4. A. C. Calkins. 5. George A. Smith
6. J. B. Leedom. 8. W. G. Miller. 9. S. H. Henderson.

While some of the efforts have been abortive, as was the case with Castellar Street and Newman Church on St. Mary's Avenue, others have amply justified their existence by supplying the religious needs of growing suburbs. Among these are Leffler Memorial, in South Omaha, with W. D. Stambaugh, pastor; Southwest Church, with R. M. Henderson pastor; West Omaha (now McCabe), T. S. Watson, pastor; Monmouth Park is now Hirst Memorial, named in honor of Rev. A. C. Hirst, former pastor of First Church. William Esplin is pushing the work here. Benson is served by the faithful, efficient Englishman, John Crews. The last three named are full of promise. Hirst Memorial has a new church, and Benson a new parsonage, and both are facing a more hopeful future.

Thus the number of churches have multiplied with the growth of the city. By some law of human nature the needs of the individual and of society are best served by dividing them into groups. When our Lord would feed the five thousand he had them divided into companies, "by hundreds and fifties." (Mark vi, 40.) So it has been found that the average Church in a city can not reach effectively more than about ten thousand of the population, or extend its influence much beyond the radius of one-half mile from the Church. This would require in Omaha ten Methodist churches to supply efficiently the religious needs of the city. Methodism has nine, not counting those in South Omaha. This seems about the right number, and they are all so located as not to be crowding each other.

The old mother church has sometimes looked on these new enterprises at the beginning with some misgivings,

fearing it would merely weaken her without strengthening the general cause of Methodism in the city. The outcome, however, has proved that her fears were groundless, and that she is buttressed on all sides by strong, vigorous Churches, and much more is being done for Christ and His kingdom in the city of Omaha than could have been done by a single Church. There are now three other Churches with a larger membership and better property than she had in 1880, and one other with as many members. In the meanwhile she herself has increased her membership from 240 in 1880, to 670 in 1903, and the value of her property from $12,000 to $100,000.

This progress has been achieved by a succession of aggressive and able pastors, beginning with J. B. Maxfield in 1880, who was placed on the Omaha District in 1881. Following Maxfield were J. W. Stewart, Charles W. Savidge, R. N. McKaig, T. M. House, P. S. Merrill, Frank Crane, John McQuoid, A. C. Hirst, and the present pastor, E. Combie Smith.

During this period there has been no time until recently that nearly all these Churches have not been burdened with heavy debts, some to the verge of bankruptcy. Now, under the co-operation of presiding elders, pastors, and laymen, they are all free from debt, or the debts are amply provided for. It may be truthfully said that at no time in the last fifty years has Omaha Methodism stood so high or been so fully equipped and ready to assume an aggressive attitude as now.

With a total membership, including South Omaha, of 2,789 (Minutes of 1903), she faces a more hopeful future than ever before, and will doubtless achieve larger

results along spiritual lines, being unhampered by the burden of debt.

Lincoln Methodism has made even greater progress than Omaha. The Minutes for 1880 gives one church, valued at $3,500, and parsonage, $2,500, and a membership of 411. But Trinity Church was even then in its incipiency, in the form of an appointment in South Lincoln as a part of the Lincoln Circuit. The city was rapidly extending southward, and when that energetic and persistent man, A. L. Folden, was appointed to Lincoln Circuit in 1878, the first Quarterly Conference of St. Paul's Church held that year, voted to request Brother Folden to take up an appointment in South Lincoln, and appointed a committee to assist him in finding a suitable place in which to hold services. The details of his subsequent struggles are given elsewhere, and it will suffice to say that an organization was effected and in 1880-81 a small frame building was erected at Twelfth and A Streets, at a cost of $1,200. This marks the beginning of Trinity Church. The little society continued a part of Lincoln Circuit until 1883, when it became a separate charge with fifty-three members. Following Brother Folden were P. S Mather, two years; J Marsh, three years; and C. H. Gilmore, one year. Under these faithful men the society increased to ninety-four members in 1887. Then H. T. Davis became pastor and continued three years. At the commencement of his pastorate the little church building was donated to what was known as Bethel, a mile west on B Street. We see the law mentioned in connection with Omaha, asserts itself in the development of our work in Lincoln, and Trinity is located about a mile from St. Paul's, and finds plenty of room

SOME OF THE MEMBERS WHO HAVE SERVED AS CONFERENCE SECRETARIES.

1. Geo. P. Trites. 2. O. W. Fifer. 3. Chas. H. Burleigh. 4. J. B. Priest. 5. D. C. Winship. 6. W. G. Vessells. 7. Z. S. Rhone.

and leaves plenty of room. Bethel is located a mile west of Trinity, and as we shall see, Grace Church will find an ample field about a mile and a half east of St. Paul.

At the close of Dr. Davis's pastorate the membership had increased to 258, and a commodious frame chapel had been erected at the corner of Sixteenth and A.

Stokely D. Roberts, one of our ablest preachers and successful pastors and presiding elders, came to the pastorate at Trinity at a time when his once strong mind was becoming unbalanced, and his health breaking down, and when he was very near the end of a useful career. He was born in Indiana, August 16, 1844, and was converted at the age of sixteen. He enlisted in the army in 1862, and remained to the end of the war. He began his ministry in 1873, and had successfully served some of the most important charges, including Peru, Tecumseh, Fairbury, David City, and Beatrice, and a full term on the Beatrice District. While at Tecumseh he was married to Miss Ella I. Gehr.

Had Stokely D. Roberts come to Trinity in the full vigor of his mental and physical powers, he would have made a large contribution to its progress. But the sad end of his influential career is at hand, and on the 16th of August, 1893, in a fit of temporary insanity, he took his own life. His brethren put on record this true estimate of their departed brother: "Brother Roberts was a close student, a deep thinker, and a good preacher."

In the fall of 1891, Dr. D. W. C. Huntington, of Genesee Conference, after a long and honorable career in that Conference, was transferred, at the invitation of the Official Board, unanimously tendered, and became their pastor. The five years' pastorate of this strong man, as

might be expected, was marked by great progress along all lines. The frame tabernacle gave place to a beautiful and commodious structure costing $17,000, which is to be the chapel of a much larger church when completed. The membership has increased to 447. While pastor of Trinity, Dr. Huntington was chosen as the agent for the entire Methodism of the State, to receive and distribute supplies during the years of drouth, in 1894-95, which difficult, delicate, and laborious service he rendered to the satisfaction of all.

The two pastors that have succeeded him are R. S. Chipperfield, who served three years, and N. A. Martin, the present pastor, who is now in the fifth year of a very successful pastorate. Both these are able and consecrated men and have carried forward the work so well begun by Dr. Huntington and his predecessors, and the result has been a still further increase in membership, which now numbers 484, and a magnificent church property, well located, and valued at $20,000.

By 1886 East Lincoln had grown to such an extent that St. Paul's Church herself recognized the necessity of another church in that part of the city, and not only consented, but promoted the new enterprise in a most substantial manner, so that Grace Church is spared the years of struggle for existence, and starts out with a $10,000 church and 107 members at the end of the first year. It was the year of the great revival at St. Paul's, during Dr. Creighton's pastorate. The pastor was assisted by J. S. Bitler, a successful evangelist. The presiding elder says in his report that year, "By the revival (at St. Paul's) the membership was carried up to 1,100, and the church became so packed with people that we

have been compelled to plan for additional room. Lots were secured in East Lincoln, one and one-half miles from St. Paul's, and Grace Church, a $10,000 edifice, is being erected thereon." This is healthy expansion, and is a case where the hive became so full that the only relief was in "swarming," with gain both to the original hive and to the swarm that departs.

The next report from the presiding elder, in speaking of Grace Charge, and of the dedication of the completed building by Bishop Warren, says: "Her membership has continued to increase from the first by accessions from St. Paul's and by conversions, until she holds a fair rank in membership." The same report says of St. Paul's, notwithstanding she has given of her members and money to start Grace Church: "St. Paul's Church is still pressing her work forward aggressively. She is a tower of strength to the cause of God in this city. We no longer attempt to count the converts. Each week, with rarest exceptions, brings its list of new recruits. Both the congregation and the Sunday-school tax the utmost capacity of the church. She responds generously to every call for either work or benevolence. In short, she is an inspiration to this city and State in every good work." "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty," is a bit of inspired philosophy that applies to Church affairs as well as to individuals.

St. Paul soon came to look upon Trinity and Grace, not as rivals, but as helpers in the proper care of the religious interests of the city, and such indeed they have been as they have grown from year to year, in numbers, power and influence, and the whole structure of Lincoln Methodism has become a unit.

SOME LOCAL PREACHERS WHO HAVE RENDERED VALUABLE SERVICE.

1. J. A. Larkin. 2. Jas. Query. 3. P. B. Ruch. 4. J. M. Dressler. 5. A. G. Blackwell. 6. A. C. Butler. 7. P. W. Howe. 8. Geo. W. Hummel. 9. C. G. Rouse. 10. Geo. Worley. 11. L. H. Stringfield. 12. Robert Laing.

Grace Church has been a success and power from the beginning. True, they have had some trouble the first year or two with their first pastor, T. Minehart, who, though a deeply pious and intellectual man, became fanatical, and so ill-balanced and perverse as to require the administration of discipline. He was tried at a preliminary hearing and suspended, and then at the Annual Conference, and expelled.

Minehart's successors were J. H. Creighton, who supplied till Conference, after Minehart's suspension; J. S. W. Dean, George W. Isham, C. M. Shepherd, L. T. Guild, R. N. Orrill, and P. P. Carroll, the present incumbent. The Church has made progress till the one hundred with which she started in 1886-87, has grown to 582.

University Place, except in the matter of municipal government, which is wisely kept distinct in order to exclude saloons and other vicious institutions, is to all intents and purposes a part of Lincoln. The selection of that piece of raw prairie and farm land, in 1886, on which to locate the Nebraska Wesleyan University, has, besides the founding of a great educational institution, resulted in attracting enough people to University Place to make a town of nearly or quite 2,000 population, and the building up of a Church of over 800 members. Probably the growth, both of the town and of the Church, is without parallel in the State. The percentage of Christian people is larger and the proportion of those that are Methodists is greater than in any other place in the State, and in these respects it has few, if any, equals in the nation. Evanston, Illinois, comes nearer to it than any other, but that soon attracted many from Chicago who

came to secure a suburban home, and there were soon many of other denominations. The Church has grown with the growth of the town, and is constantly fed by a revival spirit that pervades the Church at all times.

D. L. Thomas, Asa Sleeth, W. B. Alexander, G. W. Abbott, J. J. Mailley, B. W. Marsh, and L. C. Lemon have served as pastors, and faithfully ministered to the spiritual needs of the people and the student body. L. C. Lemon is now on his fourth year.

University Place appears in the Minutes for the first time in 1888, and is left to be supplied. It is then included among the Lincoln Churches and continued to be for some years. D. L. Thomas becomes the first pastor, serving till Conference as a supply, and was then returned. It starts out with one hundred and seven members and ten local preachers, a proportion of preachers which will be maintained throughout its history. In 1896 a $2,000 parsonage was built, but the society, though steadily and at times rapidly increasing in numbers, has been content to use the College Chapel until two years ago. They have contributed largely to the payment of the debt on the Wesleyan, giving $5,000 for that purpose. But they have constructed the foundations for a fine large structure, roofed it over, and are using what will be the basement of a fine large church, and are resting financially. But they will doubtless soon construct the superstructure.

The writer and his family have resided in University Place for nearly four years, and finds the Church the most spiritual he has ever known. Ordinary prayer and testimony meetings present at every service all the features of spiritual power seen in times of great revival interest. Two to four are on their feet at once, claiming

the privilege of speaking for the Master. Revivals break out spontaneously at the ordinary services. It is doubtful if there is another community and Church that supplies better moral and religious influences by which to constitute a wholesome environment for the students who attend than does University Place, and its Methodist Church of over 800 members.

Besides St. Paul's, the mother church, and these three strong Churches of which mention has been made, there are others, some of which give fine promise of future strength. Emmanuel appears in the Minutes for the first time in 1888, and reports at the next Conference, sixty-nine members, and now has one hundred and forty-eight, with a church worth $2,000 and parsonage valued at $1,000. Epworth Church first appears in the list of appointments in 1890, and starts out with thirty-three members and now has seventy-four, with a church valued at $2,000. It has one hundred and thirty-five teachers and scholars in the Sunday-school, which shows it has a field for work that has some promise, though the progress up to this time has not been all that was expected.

Bethel was started in the southwest part of the town on the bottoms as early as 1887, and the old A Street Church moved over and fitted up for their use. The presiding elder reports for the year 1887-88 a great revival and the membership is reported as ninety-three, including forty-one probationers, but now there are only twelve. Asbury, another suburban venture, about the same time, starts with forty-one in 1889, and reported at the last Conference fourteen.

The trouble with some of these suburban Churches is that they were started when the boom was at its zenith,

and while the city as a whole, has held its own, or grown, these particular suburbs were boomed beyond all reason, and have felt the reaction more keenly, and have been losing ground. None have made the gain that was expected, and several, after ten or twelve years of struggle, have a smaller membership than at the beginning. They are maintained as missionary posts in localities that would otherwise be destitute of the Gospel.

Though St. Paul's has seen these other strong Churches grow up around her, she continues herself to grow and easily maintains her leadership. In 1880 her membership was 411, and the church was valued at $3,500 and the parsonage at $2,500. Now she has 1,057, or about the figures attained at the time of the great revival under Bitler, the evangelist. In this period she has erected two fine church buildings, the first St. Paul's, erected at a cost of about $50,000, during McKaig's pastorate, and which burned down in September, 1899, and under Dr. Wharton's administration, the second, and much larger one. This is without doubt the best arranged building for church purposes in the West, and cost over $80,000. These results have been attained by a live, progressive membership, led by a succession of able pastors. It will be sufficient to merely name them as they have come and gone during the last twenty-five years: A. C. Williams, R. N. McKaig, C. F. Creighton, A. Marine, F. S. Stein, C. C. Lasby, W. R. Halstead, and the present pastor, F. L. Wharton. These have all been special transfers, which means that the Church has asserted its right to draw on the whole Church for the right man for pastor, and the appointing power has recognized that the Church is of such importance, with such a com-

manding position at the capital of the State, that the best man the entire Church can afford must be had if possible. St. Paul's has certainly had a succession of very able pastors, and some very spiritual, and all have achieved more or less success.

Besides these efficient pastors, St. Paul's has been blessed from the first by an able corps of lay workers, men and women, chief among whom are Dr. B. L. Paine and Mrs. M. E. Roberts. Both these consecrated persons have a genius for religion and religious work. Dr. Paine seems equally at home conducting his own private business, which is extensive, or in the Quarterly Conferences and business meetings of the Church, or prayer-meeting, Sunday-school, Epworth League room or on occasion, can break away from his practice as a physician and hold successful revival-meetings, preaching as well as "practicing." He seems to have no trouble blending the secular and religious, his business being conducted on religious principles, and his religious life proceeding on business principles. He has been prominent in the Epworth League work, being at one time on the Board of Control, and has been twice elected lay delegate to the General Conference.

Many other influential and faithful laymen have worked side by side with Dr. Paine, among them J. M. Burks. It may be said in passing, that from the first, nearly all the Churches of Lincoln have had a corps of lay workers that were both capable and willing to aid their pastors. Trinity Church has also had from the first a body of strong laymen who have co-operated with the pastors in many helpful ways. Among these are R. R. Randle, C. S. Sanderson, and many others.

Perhaps Grace Church may be said to have been specially favored with such men as L. O. Jones, J. M. Stewart, A. G. Greenlee, and Brother Furgeson.

L. O. Jones is the presiding genius who, as president of the Nebraska Conference Epworth League Assembly, has organized one of the most successful assemblies in the Church, as will appear from statements made elsewhere.

J. M. Stewart, who has been for years the honored secretary of the Board of Trustees of Nebraska Wesleyan University, and an influential member of the Board.

University Place is said to have the cream of the laity from many of the other Churches of the State, so that when she raises over $1,300 for missions, $700 for education, and enough more for the other connectional benevolences to swell the whole amount to $3,000, or nearly twice as much for benevolence as for current expenses, other Churches say it is hardly fair that that Church's benevolence should be the standard for the others, which have been weakened, that she may be strong. The real strength of this Church can hardly be said to result from the pre-eminence of the few strong leaders, but from a high general average of unselfish devotion to the cause of Christ.

If we survey Lincoln Methodism as a whole, we will find the progress has been marvelous during these last twenty-four years. Beginning it in 1880, with one society of 411 members, one church valued at $3,500, and one parsonage worth $2,500, it has increased till there are now ten, including University Place, with a total membership of 3,173, and a total property valuation of $148,800, including two parsonages, valued at $3,000.

Among the most useful local preachers we have had

in Nebraska was P. W. Howe, for many years city missionary in Lincoln, and chaplain of the penitentiary. He came to Lincoln about 1880, and soon exhibited qualities which in special manner equipped him for his career of great usefulness, caring for the unfortunate poor in the city and dealing with the criminals at the State prison. So pre-eminently was he fitted for both lines of work that by common consent of donors and beneficiaries, Father Howe was the man to receive their benefactions on the one hand, and the one the worthy poor could always count on for tactful help bestowed in a way that did not hurt.

He semed to have a rare faculty for finding out who the really needy were, and was always on the lookout for them. His shrewd knowledge of human nature made it difficult for any to impose on him. The business men came to prefer having Brother Howe distribute their charity than to do it themselves, assured that he would bestow wisely what they gave him. Thus he came to keep two lists (principally in his mind), those who needed something and the one who would supply that particular need. He rarely failed to be able to keep the supply equal to the need, even in times of most adverse conditions. Such was the confidence of many business and professional men that they virtually said to him, "Draw on us for whatever you need for your work." They were sure he would not abuse their confidence or fail to make the wisest use of their gifts. They would give him flour by the ton, and only P. W. Howe and the Lord and the person helped knew who got it. They did not want to know. It was enough to know that Father Howe was distributing it.

He was not less adapted to the difficult work of the

chaplaincy of the penitentiary. This fitness became so well recognized that through all the changing political complexions of State administration, P. W. Howe was retained in that work. Only one governor ever seemed to have a moment's questioning about the matter, and that was J. E. Boyd, whose sympathies were Roman Catholic. He attempted to displace Howe with a Catholic priest, but there was such a storm of protest against it that he reinstated him.

Brother Howe could tell when he saw a convict coming in whether he was a confirmed criminal or had been led into crime on the impulse. While not neglecting the hardened criminal, he would give special attention to the more promising cases.

The writer had one of those cases come under his observation. A mere boy, whose name I will omit, the son of respectable parents, got into a company of rough boys who robbed a store. Though my young friend would not share the spoil he was in bad company and all were sent to the State prison for a year. I went to see him, and when he came into the waiting-room of the penitentiary he said, "Mr. Marquette, you could hardly expect to find me in such a place as this. But it is all right. Father and mother had often warned me not to go with those boys, and I ought to have known better. I have no complaints against the State. The sentence was just. Besides, I am a better boy than I was before coming here. Chaplain Howe came to me at once and was so kind and persuasive that he has led me to the Savior and I will go forth a Christian." He was soon after pardoned by Governor Crounse, at the earnest request of his mother, backed by the recommendation of the trial judge, and is

now leading an honorable, useful life. This is a fair sample of what Chaplain Howe was doing during the many years of his incumbency.

He died recently at his home in Lincoln, and among the chief mourners were the rich whose benefactions he had so wisely distributed, and the poor whom he had so often befriended.

The growth of the local Churches into more completeness of organization, larger equipment in the way of church buildings, and enlarged membership, has been going on at a rapid rate throughout all the Conferences.

In 1880 there were only two charges, Omaha and Lincoln, that had as many as two hundred members, and neither of these had five hundred. Now there are in the Nebraska Conference thirty-five that have over two hundred, and six that have over five hundred, and one with over a thousand. In the North Nebraska Conference there are eighteen with over two hundred, and two with over five hundred. In the West Nebraska Conference there are nine with over two hundred members, and in the Northwest Conference there are two. In the whole of Nebraska we now have one with one thousand, eight with over five hundred, and sixty-four with over two hundred, where we only had two in 1880. Assuming that a charge with two hundred members, or over, of average quality, is a strong Church, able easily to maintain itself, pay comfortable salaries, and make itself felt for good, the foregoing facts show that we have vastly multiplied our power in the last twenty-five years, throughout the entire State, by multiplying the number of strong, influential Churches.

It might seem well to mention all the Churches that

have attained to strength according to this standard, but numbers are not always a correct measure of strength, and many of those with less membership are doing more for the Master than some of the larger Churches. Nor are numbers a test of merit, for the strength of the Church numerically at least, must depend somewhat on the size of the town and character of the population. It is easier to build up a strong Church of over eight hundred in a small place like University Place, with the character of the people they have there, than to build up a Church of similar size in a big city like Omaha, with its mixed population. But as the purpose of this comparison is to show a certain line of growth during the period, we will refer the reader to the Published Minutes for the names of the "strong Churches," and call on him to rejoice and be thankful for the fact that we are developing so many centers of great moral influence and spiritual power.

An examination of the Minutes will show that of these sixty-four strong Churches, numerically considered, only one or two are circuits. What does this mean? Is the Church discarding the circuit system, and thereby neglecting the rural districts, from which she and the State have heretofore drawn so much of their strength? Perhaps, but not necessarily. It may, and probably does mean that from several causes the Church finds it more and more difficult to maintain the circuit system in its old-time power and efficiency.

First. The existing tendency of the population towards cities, towns, and villages, by which a much smaller percentage remains in the rural districts, leaves the Church no choice but to follow this population, and

give relatively more attention to those places where the people are.

Second. The need and demand for a resident pastor to oversee the various departments of the Church creates the tendency toward small stations, rather than large circuits.

Third. The railroads have built so many lines through the State, and built up so many villages and towns that there are not very many people left who can not attend service in one of these towns, and many prefer the more frequent and regular services in the town, to the less frequent meeting in the country.

Fourth. Hence some of the strong circuits that flourished during the first periods, like Mt. Pleasant and Bellevue, have disappeared entirely from this cause. Before the time of railroads, Mt. Pleasant, at first under the name of Rock Bluffs, maintained her place for many years at the head of the column, with the largest membership of any charge in the Conference. But the changed conditions have made this impossible.

In this last period the Church found herself confronted with a condition, and whatever her theory might have been, she has but one duty, and that is to carry the Gospel to the people, wherever they are, in city, town, village, or on the farms. It is not her function to compel them to stay on the farms so she may keep up rural work and still maintain large circuits.

But she still resorts to the circuit system, wherever needed, both in the country, and in uniting two or more villages or towns in circuits. But this has always been temporary, each town being ambitious to reach the point where it could be a station, and have the pastor live among them and give his entire time to that society.

And after all, may not this have some advantages over the old circuit system? The writer is of the opinion, formed after nearly forty years' experience as pastor on circuits and stations, and as presiding elder, that this is true. It gives the pastor a better chance to give pastoral care and work the more complicated machinery up to its full capacity.

CHAPTER XXIII.

FOURTH PERIOD. (1880-1904.)

GERMAN AND SCANDINAVIAN WORK.

It would be wholly improper to close a history of Nebraska Methodism without reference to these lines of work which are as much a part of Methodism as our English-speaking work. The only difference is that of language. It has been found best to carry on our work among each of these peoples yet speaking a foreign language, by those speaking their own tongue, with separate charges, districts, and Conferences.

Though over a year ago I requested competent representatives of these classes to furnish me a sketch of their history, with a single exception I have been unable to get any one to supply the necessary data to enable me to give much of the details of these different lines of work in our Church in Nebraska. That exception is Rev. Charles Harms, pastor of our German Church in Lincoln, who has kindly given me a brief account of our German work in Nebraska.

It is greatly to the credit of our German brethren that their work began about the same time as the English-speaking work, the first sermon being preached by William Fiegenbaum, presiding elder of the Missouri District, under some trees in the southeast part of the State, as early as 1855. In 1856 C. F. Langer was appointed to

Kansas and Nebraska Mission, embracing all their work in the two territories. John Hausam, Sr., becomes presiding elder of Missouri District and has the oversight of Kansas and Nebraska.

From now on their work will proceed under conditions similar to the English work, with the same frontier hardships and privations we encountered, with these differences: Their circuits are much larger than ours, embracing whole Territories, while we were content with a few counties. Their districts sometimes included one State and two Territories and their Conferences were correspondingly comprehensive in the area included in their bounds. If our circuit-riders had long journeys to make between appointments, theirs had longer. If ours had sometimes to wait a long while before effecting an organization, they waited still longer. If our preachers found the soil hard and the people prejudiced against us, their soil was perhaps still worse and the prejudices more intense, and the difficulties still greater.

Brother Langer preaches his first sermon in a cabin near where Humboldt now stands.

But Brother Harms tells the story so well I quote from his paper. Speaking of this first year and subsequent work, he says:

"But little seems to have been accomplished during 1856 and 1857. One quarterly-meeting was held during this time, and that was in the Kansas territory. It seems that Rev. Langer had devoted most of his time and labor in the vicinity of Nebraska City, but did not succeed in organizing a society. A small class had been organized in the southeast corner of the State where the first sermon had been preached.

"In 1857 Nebraska City Mission was formed, with Rev. Jacob Feisel, presiding elder of Missouri District, and George Schatz, missionary of Nebraska Territory. Rev. Schatz made his headquarters at Nebraska City, but traveled over that part of the territory now known as Humboldt, Kramer, and Plattsmouth. One family from Missouri and two families from Ohio, who were members moved at this time to a point near Humboldt, where they settled and were then successful in organizing a class there.

"In 1858 the Omaha Mission was organized and J. P. Miller appointed missionary. In 1860 August Mecke was appointed his successor and a class was organized in the vicinity of Papillion. H. Muehlenbrock was appointed to Nebraska City in 1860 and remained until 1862, when H. C. Dreyer was appointed and labored faithfully up to 1863, when Henry Meyer was made his successor and did all he could to advance the cause of Christ, remaining till the fall of 1864.

"In 1860 Table Rock, Salem, Humboldt, and Muddy were separated from Nebraska City and Justus Langer was appointed missionary. In 1862 H. Meyer succeeded him, and in 1863-1865 C. Pothast followed, all of whom traveled over the then unsettled country of Clatonia Creek, Swan Creek, Meridian, Fairbury, and Turkey Creek, without success, leaving their families for weeks and months, before they could return home. In 1864 German Conferences were organized and the first report was made to the Conference. Nebraska City Mission reported thirty-three full members and ten probationers. Of course this included all the little classes in the surrounding country. Omaha and its territory reported

seventeen members and three probationers. Salem, including Table Rock, Humboldt, and the surrounding country, twenty-two members and twenty-six probationers. Total members, seventy-two; probationers, thirty-nine. Salem reported one parsonage, valued at $200; one Sunday-school with five teachers and seventeen scholars. Total collections for benevolent causes: For missions, $58.60; necessitous cases, $17.15; tracts, $4.20; Bible Cause, $7.50; Sunday-school Union, $2.35. These were the results of the first nine years of German Methodism in the State. The privations, burdens, and sufferings of preachers and members were great, but the achievements noble. At that Conference Bishop E. S. Janes presiding, Charles Heidel was appointed presiding elder of the newly formed St. Joseph District, comprising the entire Territories of Kansas and Nebraska.

"During the period from 1860 to 1868 there was but slow progress, mostly due to the lack of means and men. However, some advancement was made. Fields of labor were more conveniently adjusted and divided and some new appointments taken up. Henry Meyer, who made his headquarters at Salem, Nebraska, 1864-65, began to preach at or near Swan Creek, about ten miles west of Swanton. C. Pothast continued to labor on this field, living at or near the place now called Humboldt, taking in Swan Creek, Meridian, and Fairbury, operating westward. In 1866, C. Steinmeyer was appointed, who lived at Muddy Creek, traveling over all the ground of four or five counties. In 1867 H. Muehlenbrock was appointed his successor up to 1870. In 1867 F. Miller was appointed to Nebraska City Mission, including Hamburg, Iowa, and westward to Meridian, Nebraska, including

some new appointments, such as Centerville and Clatonia. At Pekin, Illinois, in 1868, Bishop E. S. Janes made the following appointments: F. W. Meyer, presiding elder of St. Joseph District, comprising the Kansas and Nebraska Territories, with the following missionaries: Nebraska City and Linden, J. Hausam, Jr.; Omaha City, P. J. May; Lincoln City, F. H. Meyer; Salem, H. Meuhlenbrock. Bear in mind that the above were names for stations without organized societies, and the missionaries were to look after the Germans over the entire inhabited part of the territory. In 1868 the above four missions reported 142 members in all. In 1869, 204 members, an increase of sixty-two.

"At the seventh session of the Southwest German Conference at St. Charles, Missouri, in 1870, Bishop Simpson presiding, H. Fiegenbaum was appointed presiding elder of St. Joseph District. This district had nineteen appointments, including the entire States of Kansas and Nebraska, with the following charges on the Nebraska part of the district: Nebraska City, Tecumseh, Lincoln, Omaha, and Meridian. Besides these it included Denver, Colorado. This was surely a notable extension for a district.

"In 1872 the Conference met in Quincy, Illnois, Bishop Gilbert Haven presiding. Jacob Tanner was made presiding elder, his district embracing the entire State of Nebraska. York Center was taken in as an appointment. In 1873, Platte Valley, now Osceola, was taken up and C. W. Lauenstein appointed missionary, who labored faithfully, pressed the work forward and extended it, taking in Merrick and Howard Counties, now known as St. Paul and Boelus. This was made an appointment in

1875 with C. W. Lauenstein as the missionary. At this time Lincoln and Centerville was made a charge and H. R. Riemer appointed as the missionary. In 1876 Elkhorn, now West Point, and Pebble Creek were taken up and C. W. Lauenstein appointed to take care of these points and extend the work.

"In 1878 the West German Conference was organized at St. Joseph, Missouri, Bishop Harris presiding. At this time German Methodism had eleven charges with as many missionaries in Nebraska.

"H. Fiegenbaum was appointed presiding elder. The district then numbered 604 members and 105 probationers; thirteen churches, six parsonages, twenty-four Sunday-schools, one hundred and eighty officers and teachers and 734 scholars. This was the result of twenty-two years of privations, hardships, and labor.

"In 1879 C. Harms was appointed presiding elder of Nebraska District. At this time Papillion and Bell Creek were made a charge, and C. Lauenstein appointed their pastor. In 1880 Lincoln City was made a mission and J. G. Kost appointed to this charge. At the same time Oxford, in Furnas County, with adjoining counties, were formed into a mission, and W. C. Kellner appointed missionary. In 1881 at the third annual session of the West German Conference, held at Oregon, Missouri, Bishop R. S. Foster presiding, C. W. Lauenstein was appointed missionary to the northwestern part of Nebraska, giving him an unlimited territory to work, looking after the Germans and fixing stations and appointments, to preach and organize societies wherever he found it practicable. He made his home for his family at Norfolk, for he himself could only come home once in a while on a visit.

Neligh, St. James, St. Peters, Weigand, Hainesville, Niobrara, O'Neill, Ray, Stuart, Plum Valley, Bow Valley, Ballentins, Halifax, Albion, Oakdale, along the Ray Valley, and westward as far as Arabia, Woodlake, and Ainsworth, all of this territory was canvassed. In spite of all the privations, hardships, and hard labor this proved to be the most satisfactory and blessed work during his entire ministry.

"In 1882 McCook and Beaver Creek were made a mission with W. C. Kellner as the missionary. Custer, Valley, Holt, and Knox Counties were given considerable attention, but owing to the lack of men and means were not regularly cared for.

"In 1883 a mission was formed at Stuart, with the adjoining counties, and Charles Werner was appointed there, and H. C. Ihne was put in charge of the newly formed circuit now called Sterling. Valentine was made a mission during this time.

"In 1884 F. H. Wippermann was stationed at Custer and Broken Bow. In 1885 the work was taken up at Courtland and Beatrice by Gustav Becker, Custer, Frontier, and Ash Creek, Gordon, and Rushville, Greeley and Wheeler, Niobrara, Scottsville were supplied. In 1886, at the eighth annual session of the West German Conference, held at Kansas City, Kansas, Bishop J. M. Walden presiding, two districts were made and Jacob Tanner was appointed presiding elder of Nebraska District and H. Bruns presiding elder of North Nebraska District, Platte River to be the dividing line. Big Springs, Hemmingford, and Hebron were made appointments, and in 1887 Colby, with C. Falter, missionary, was added to the list.

"Slow but steady has been the growth of German Methodism, so that in 1890 there were twenty-nine appointments with but twenty-six regular Conference members (preachers) to take care of them. These twenty-nine appointments, consisting of 1,633 members and 206 probationers, contributed $1,386, or about eighty-five cents per member, to missions. Sunday-schools, fifty-two; officers and teachers, 466; scholars, 2,059. All collections were taken and people contributed as they were able.

"During the last ten years German Methodism has been nearly at a standstill, owing to light immigration from Europe, and many of our younger people having moved westward into Oklahoma, Washington, Idaho, Dakota, and also into localities where there are no German Churches, and others on account of the language have united with our English Churches. In 1900 German Methodism numbered fifty-two churches, thirty-three parsonages, fifty-three Sunday-schools, 577 officers and teachers, 2,178 members, and 175 probationers.

"During the period of ten years, 1890-1900, passing through drought and failures, German Methodism kept up its collections to the usual standard. For instance, for mission, $18,055 was given, being an average of over eighty-five cents per member.

"In 1903 the collections for missions was over $1.15 per member, being a little more than during 1901 and 1902. On Nebraska soil are twenty-nine charges and as many faithful workers employed to press forward on the line. Since 1890, H. Bruns, P. C. Schramm, and Edward Sallenbach were filling the office of presiding elder in the order named, on the North Nebraska District, and J. Tanner, Edward Sallenbach, and G. J. Leist were do-

ing district work on the Nebraska District, officiating in this capacity at the following points: Beatrice, Centerville, and Highland, Clatonia, Cortland, Culbertson, Humboldt, Jansen and Gilead, Kramer and Hallam, Lincoln, Macon and Oxford, and Sterling.

"J. G. Leist, presiding elder of North Nebraska District, has charge of Arlington, Berlin, Boelus, Duncan and Columbus, Eustis, Friend, Grand Island and Palmer, Hampton, Kalamazoo and Fair View, Omaha, Osceola, Papillion and Portal, Rushville, South Omaha and Plattsmouth, Waco and Seward, West Point and Scribner, Western and Swanton. Humboldt was the first self-supporting charge, in 1869. The first German camp-meeting was held June, 1868, near Centerville, in Charles Krolls's grove. The first district meeting was held at Clatonia in June, 1875."

Our German brethren closed their first half-century with a membership of 1,788 and ninety-nine probationers, forty-two churches, valued at $74,100, and twenty-seven parsonages, valued at $33,100, and contributed for missions in 1903 the sum of $2,199, being an average of $1.23 per member.

SCANDINAVIAN WORK.

As early as 1871 an effort was made to establish a mission and start the work. The first man appointed failed to come, and of the second, A. G. White speaks thus in his report to the Conference of 1872:

"At the request of Bishop Ames, I applied to Rev. S. B. Newman, presiding elder of the Swede Mission District, Illinois Conference, for another man, and he recommended Peter Lindquist, a local preacher of Chi-

cago. Brother Lindquist reported to me about the first of October, 1871, and was assigned to the mission, with the agreement that he should receive but $150 of the mission fund for the remainder of the Conference year.* Brother Lindquist has labored incessantly among his people, traveling and preaching in four presiding elder's districts, and he has organized societies in all these districts. The Scandinavians in the State number 10,000; they are generally irreligious, but moral and industrious. They are widely scattered, like sheep without a shepherd, but eager to receive any one who cares for their souls and who can impart religious instruction in their own language. There is a pressing demand upon our Church for more men and more money for this work."

The next year Arthur Smith is appointed to assist Peter Lindquist in prosecuting the work, but the presiding elder speaks less hopefully in his next report: "They have traveled extensively and labored faithfully, but little has been accomplished. And in my judgment the results of the experiment do not justify a continuance of the mission. It appears unwise to perpetuate the language and customs of other nationalities among us, and I am not prepared to ask for an appropriation of mission funds for this purpose."

Nothing more seems to have been done until 1877 when John Linn began work in Oakland. Since then the work has grown until we have prosperous charges in Omaha, Lincoln, Oakland, and several other places in the State. The latest statistics we have are for 1902, at which time there were 1,090 full members and twenty probationers.

* The Conference then met in the spring.

We would be glad to trace more fully the history of this work, as we doubt not it presents the same features that the English and the German work have presented. If there has been any difference it has been in the direction of larger circuits and larger districts than that which has been required in our German work. We may safely say that the toils and hardships and difficulties have not been any less and the faith and devotion and heroism of the workers must have been equally great.

NORWEGIAN WORK.

This did not begin until 1880, and there being but very few of that people in the State, only two charges have been formed, one at Fontenelle and one at Omaha. The former has thirty and the latter sixty-five, including probationers.

CHAPTER XXIV.

FOURTH PERIOD. (1880-1904.)

As we have watched this great organization of Nebraska Methodism grow, it has seemed more like an organism with its principle of spiritual life building itself up into maturity and completeness, power and influence, very much after the law of development of the individual, with the periods of infancy and youth, when little is required or expected except growth. But growth brings ever-increasing power and larger range of action. It has been developing its organs, increasing their functions, and ever-broadening the range of its activity and the extent of its relations.

At the beginning it must receive help rather than give help. Hence for a number of years there were but few benevolent collections taken, while the amount of missionary money received was relatively greater, as we have seen, than at subsequent periods when the need was even more urgent.

The only subordinate organizations were the class and Sunday-school, and the class-meeting and prayer-meeting, and the preaching service had regard more for the maintenance of the life of the infant Church than for any activities looking to helping outside of itself.

But a religious organism, with as vigorous a type of spiritual life as that possessed by Methodism could not help but grow into conditions of greater strength and increasing responsibility, and ever-broadening range of ac-

tivity. She will be expected to increase the range of her own inner activities, looking to the care of her young people, by improved methods in Sunday-school work, and the organization of the young people into societies specially adapted to their development along the line of spiritual life, moral restraint, and more efficient service for the Master.

She will be expected to take a more intelligent view of the needs of the great world outside of the narrow circle of her own existence, and to come in touch with the great movements in our own country, such as the Church Extension, Freedmen's Aid, in its efforts to help up a race; the Woman's Home Missionary Society, with its varied benevolent enterprises, like our Mothers' Jewels Home, and the beneficent deaconess movement. Then she must keep in touch with the great world movements, as represented by our Missionary Society, and the sister organization, the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society.

She will be expected to lend a helping hand in moral reforms, and especially see that her great influence be unmistakably on the side of temperance and against the saloon.

As we enter upon this fourth and final period we are inspired, both by the achievements of the past and the prospects of the future. The quarter of a century just past, from 1854 to 1880, has been an eventful one. Most of it has been characterized by storms in the political world and disasters in the industrial world. There has been an almost constant struggle against great difficulties of various kinds. The periods of peace and prosperity and other favorable conditions have been brief and few and far between. The strength of the Church is to be

measured as much by the obstacles overcome as the achievements wrought; judged by either standard, she has stood the test. If there have been battles, there have also been victories. If there have been difficulties, they have been met and overcome. If there have been hardships, they have been patiently borne. If the work has demanded sacrifices, they have not been withheld.

Though the obstacles at times have seemed almost insurmountable, there has been no period during which some progress has not been made, and at some periods great progress.

As we look back from the summit of the year 1880, and view the twenty-five years over which the Church has passed in her work of planting Christianity in Nebraska, it may be said that, with the exception of "bleeding Kansas," no section of the Lord's vineyard, and no quarter of a century of time, have presented greater difficulties, involved more hardships, or called for more real heroism, in all the history of the frontier work of the Church, than did Nebraska during this period.

The fourth period, on which we are entering, will present some marked contrasts with the preceding ones. The prevailing conditions will be far more favorable, the opportunities in some directions greater and the responsibilities correspondingly increased. Methodism will again be tested. She has shown that she can meet adversity and triumph in spite of it. How will she stand prosperity; will she come to trust in her own acquired strength, and cease to keep close to God, and trust only in Him? It has often occurred in the history of the Church that when the life and power of Christianity has built up a great institution, with machinery complete for

the further carrying out of the purpose of this living principle, the institution has ceased to be the means through which the life and power is to accomplish its purposes in saving souls and building them up into high-grade men and women, and has itself become the end to the maintenance of which the energies of the Church are directed. Will history repeat itself? We shall see.

The keynote in this period, as in the one just preceding, is still expansion, but it is largely expansion of another kind. Before, the expansion has been territorial, with some traces of the beginnings of the expansion of the range of the Church activities along new lines. As early as 1869, the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society had been organized and auxiliaries were formed in some of the Churches in the sixties. But there was still a lingering doubt as to the need of this new society, and the zealous women found scanty welcome by not a few pastors. Even some of the officials of the parent Missionary Society looked askance at the interloper, fearing it would cut in on receipts. True, to prevent this, the women were prohibited taking any public collection. Notwithstanding this handicap, they sometimes reported more for the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society than the pastor did for the parent society.

There were not many auxiliaries formed until late in the seventies, when the sainted Mary Ninde visited the State and organized some societies. Mrs. Angie F. Newman was also active during these years in promoting the interests of this society, and was very successful in extending the range of its influence and its hold upon the people, so that in 1879, when Mrs. M. J. Shelley, of Tecumseh, was elected secretary for the Nebraska Con-

MRS. M. J. SHELLEY,

For many years organizer for Nebraska, and Treasurer of Topeka Branch.

MISS MATILDA WATSON,

Corresponding Secretary, Topeka Branch.

MISS URDELL MONTGOMERY,

Principal of Baldwin High School for girls, Bangalore, India.

MISS REBECCA WATSON,

Missionary to Japan.

MISS LOUISA IMHOFF,

Missionary to Japan.

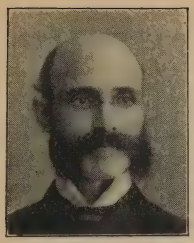
ference, the young society had demonstrated its vitality and vindicated its right to be by effective work in raising money and supporting missionaries in the foreign field. And it was found that instead of curtailing the receipts of the parent society, it was materially aiding it by disseminating missionary information and stimulating the Church to unselfish giving.

Mrs. Shelley entered upon her work with enthusiasm and prosecuted it with vigor, going not only to the places accessible by railroad, but traveling many hundreds of miles in her own private conveyance, thus reaching many points away from the railroads. In 1883 the society had become so well established throughout the Western States that the Topeka Branch was organized, and Mrs. Shelley was elected to the responsible place of branch treasurer, a promotion she had well earned.

For sixteen years Miss Matilda Watson, of Lincoln, Nebraska, the daughter of a Methodist preacher, has been the efficient corresponding secretary of the Topeka Branch, which includes the States of Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming. Mrs. Ida Moe, of Fremont, Nebraska, the daughter of E. H. Rogers, has been for many years the Conference secretary for North Nebraska Conference, rendering valuable service.

This is the only society in our Church, the work of which lies wholly in the foreign field, and may therefore be said to be the one whose work represents disinterested benevolence more nearly than any other.

That its great work in the foreign field is coming to be highly appreciated is evident from the words of unstinted praise by Bishop Moore, in China, and all our bishops that have visited China and India. Perhaps



REV. E. R. FULKERSON,

Principal of the Chingci Seminary, Nagasaki, Japan.

REV. STEPHEN A. BECK.

In charge of publishing interests at Seoul, Korea.

MRS. GEORGE S. MINER,

Missionary to China.

REV. JAMES H. WORLEY,

Missionary to China.

REV. GEORGE S. MINER,

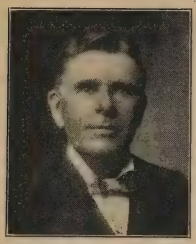
Missionary to China.

MISSIONARIES OF THE PARENT BOARD.

there could be no more competent witness as to the high character of their work than Bishop Warne, the greater part of whose ministerial life has been spent in India. In an interview in the *Christian Advocate* for March 24, 1904, in answer to an inquiry concerning the work of this society, he pays this well-deserved tribute both to the noble women who manage the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society at home and their missionaries in the field:

"Our Woman's Foreign Missionary Society has some of the choicest spirits of the nation in India. Not only that, but I suppose it is not generally known that the women have sent more money to India each year of the quadrennium than the parent society has sent. Because of this the women are able in some places to educate their girls where we are not the boys, until it is difficult to find husbands for the girls who are at all their equals. When one remembers that women have been illiterate through the centuries in India, and now compares that with a state of affairs in the Christian Church where the women are better educated than the men, it is surely true 'these that have turned the world upside down are come hither also.' One often wonders whether the women who go to the field or the women who remain at home, and without salary give time and thought to raising the necessary funds to carry on the work, are the most worthy; and when one remembers the restrictions that have been put upon the women in raising the money, it seems still more wonderful. May we all catch the spirit of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society workers, and may they increase and grow mightily, is the prayer of all Indian workers!"

It is a happy coincidence that in 1880, when Nebraska



REV. PETER VAN FLEET,

Missionary to Porto Rico.

REV. E. E. WILSON,

Missionary to Porto Rico.

REV. J. R. GORTNER,

Missionary to Africa.

REV. LESLIE STEVENS,

Superintendent of Missions in Central China.

MRS. EVA VAN FLEET,

Missionary to Porto Rico.

MRS. LOUISA COLLINS,

Prominent worker in W. H. M. S.

MISSIONARIES OF THE PARENT BOARD.

Methodism was girding herself for an advance, the Woman's Home Missionary Society had its birth and would soon become a potent factor in the larger work of the Church, and often make life more comfortable for the itinerant and his wife and children. Up to that time, except in times of special calamity, the missionary on the frontier was never relieved and gladdened by the receipt of a barrel or box of supplies to supplement his meager salary. But from now on, thanks to this noble society, this is to be a common experience.

And when a time of special need came, by reason of the drouth in 1894, the writer, who was then presiding elder of the Neligh District, in the North Nebraska Conference, the one which suffered most, this blessed society only needed to be notified of the situation and they at once started the streams of beneficence which were the first to reach the scene of destitution, and enabled our pastors to relieve the suffering, not only of our own people, but of Congregationalists, Baptists, Catholics, non-Church members, and even infidels shared the bounty supplied by the Department of Supplies of the Woman's Home Missionary Society. Boxes and barrels came from New England, North and South Carolina, the States of the Middle West, and from the Pacific Coast, and not a little cash as well. The elder and his wife gave up half of their house as a supply depot, and they, and nearly all the pastors were kept busy distributing this beneficence.

What was done for the Neligh District in 1894 is but a type of what this society is doing all the time for all the Nebraska and other Western Conferences. In 1888 the West Nebraska Conference resolved that "we are grateful to the Woman's Home Missionary Society for its aid.

Many pastors would have been compelled to leave their fields of labor, had it not been for this band of noble, Christian women."

Still earlier, in 1884, Dr. Lemon, in his report, says: "The Woman's Home Missionary Society has done a grand work in helping by sending clothing to the preachers and their families, and others in our mission field. This has long been a felt necessity and is doing good."

But the beneficence of this society is not confined to sending supplies to the missionaries on the frontier, but has taken on a multiplicity of forms, and extends from Porto Rico to Alaska. It has established what to Nebraska Methodism is doubtless its most important institution, its National Mothers' Jewels Home at York. This will be spoken of on another page.

Doubtless the most prominent among the good women who have extended the organization of this society within the bounds of Nebraska is Mrs. M. E. Roberts, who has for years been national organizer. Others, like Mrs. Louisa Collins, in West Nebraska Conference; Mrs. J. B. Maxfield, Mrs. John Crews, Mrs. J. B. Leedom, Mrs. D. C. Winship, and others of the North Nebraska Conference, that might be mentioned, have in various ways rendered valuable service in this connection.

But probably the most urgent need of Nebraska Methodism at the beginning of this fourth period was more church buildings in which to house the multitudes that had come into our fold by immigration and conversions. The number of circuits and stations have increased to 136. But we must remember that we are still in the period when the stations are yet few, and the circuit system yet prevails to a large extent. It is not uncommon

for these circuits to have from four to eight appointments, and some of the presiding elders report circuits with ten and even fifteen appointments. It would be safe to say that at about that time the average circuit had not less than four separate appointments, and that the general average, including stations and circuits could not have been less than three appointments for each charge. But lest we overstate the facts in this case we will make the general average two. This would give us two hundred and seventy-two separate Methodist societies to be housed, while the total number of churches in 1880 was only seventy-seven. This leaves one hundred and ninety-five unhoused societies and congregations. In other words, over two-thirds of the societies are entirely without shelter, except as pensioners on the State for school-houses, and on other denominations occasionally for a church.

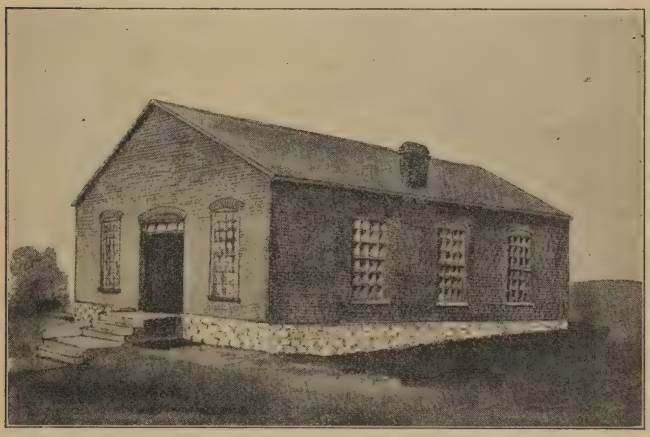
Besides these two hundred societies and congregations for which the Church has not as yet been able to furnish any shelter, there are many of the older societies that have outgrown the small buildings they first erected and must have larger ones. Probably two-thirds of those which already have churches will have to build new ones in the next ten years.

Thus in 1880 Nebraska Methodism is far behind in her church buildings. Many of her congregations are unhoused, or are still in the school-house stage of development. This is better than no place, but can not be permanent.

The conditions we have seen have been such since this need for churches began to be urgent by reason of

the marvelous growth of the last decade, that many projected enterprises have had to be abandoned, and few churches have been built. Indeed throughout the entire State during the whole quarter of a century there has been no time that has been favorable to church-building.

Besides, the Church Extension Society has been in



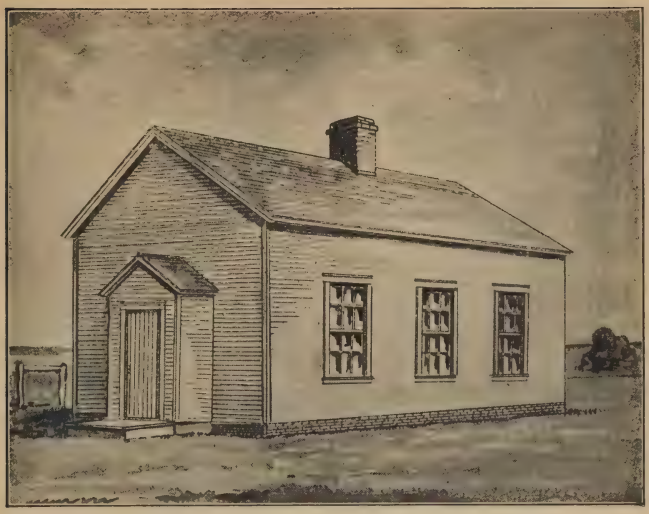
First Methodist Church Built in Nebraska, at Nebraska City, 1855-6.

effective operation but a few years, and has not been able to do as much as it will in the next quarter of a century. Happily, just as Nebraska Methodism emerges from under the disastrous financial conditions that have made much church-building an impossibility in the past, there emerges upon the scene of action, a Chaplain McCabe, in whose fertile brain and large, warm heart so

many forward movements have been born, and about this time he starts that prolific source of helpfulness for Nebraska and the entire West, known as the Frontier Fund. This has wonderfully stimulated church-building.

An incident in the early history of the Wayne Church illustrates the difficulties pastors and presiding elders have had of inspiring the discouraged band with enough confidence to induce them to try, even after the need of a church had become most urgent. The only thing in the way of rapid advance and permanent hold at Wayne was a church. Strange to say, the Presbyterian, Lutheran, and Baptist had all got ahead of us, and we were pensioners on the bounty of the Baptists for a place to worship. But the very fact that these three had already been built made our people feel that it was impossible to build another.

This was the situation in 1884, when the pastor, H. C. Pittenger, sent for the writer, then presiding elder, to attend a meeting called for the purpose of considering the advisability of erecting a place of worship. The voice of nearly all the brethren was against the project, deeming it impossible. Things seemed to be going the wrong way, and the pastor, whose heart was set on having a church, was weeping, when good Sister Wm. Miller rose and spoke as follows: "You brethren say we can't build a church. I say we must." And with the tears streaming down her cheeks she continued, "You know my health is poor and we live a mile from town, and hoped we might this year have a more comfortable conveyance than a lumber wagon. But I will continue to ride in the old lumber wagon, and put that $100 in a church." And then when I told them that the Church Extension



First Church Built in Lincoln, Nebraska, 1868. Size, 25x40. Seating Capacity, 200.

Present St. Paul's Church, Lincoln, Nebraska. Size, 142x150. Seating Capacity, 2,300.

would give them $250 and loan them $250, they took courage and soon had a subscription of $1,000, and soon after this had a $2,000 church.

This case at Wayne is mentioned as typical of a great many. Perhaps no part of our work has represented more of faith and the spirit of self-sacrifice than in the

SOD METHODIST CHURCH BUILT IN TYRONE, RED WILLOW COUNTY, IN 1886. A TYPE OF MANY OF THE FIRST CHURCHES ERECTED IN NEBRASKA.

building of these first churches. How many of these have been built, not because from a business standpoint, the prudent man of the world could say it was practicable or even possible, but because some self-sacrificing Mrs. Miller has said it must be done. Perhaps in no field have so many seeming impossibilities become realities. There were evidently at work in this phase of our

church life moral and spiritual forces that the cool, calculating business man wot not of. When we had organized at Stanton the second time, in 1883, the need of a church seemed imperative, and as presiding elder, I was urging them to build, but was met with doubts as to their ability. John A. Ehrhardt, who knew every one in the community, undertook to show me that $600 was the utmost that could be raised. I said to him, "Raise that and we will build a church." The point in this, as in many such cases, was to get the people to venture. When they started with their subscription paper, they soon had over $1,000 pledged, and ere long they had an excellent church.

These scenes witnessed at Wayne and Stanton, with slight variation of detail, but always arising from the same cause, love for the Master, and faith in God, are transpiring in every section of the State, and Nebraska Methodism enters upon a church-building era.

The Church enters upon this last period with seventy-seven churches valued at $147,000, and sixty-one parsonages valued at $41,266. We now have by Conferences:

Conferences.	Churches.	Value.	Parsonages.	Value.
Nebraska,	241	$748,250	124	$133,805
North Nebraska,	167	564,005	104	123,580
West Nebraska,	134	233,750	68	55,190
Northwest Nebraska,	32	46,950	25	17,950
Total,	574	$1,592,955	321	$330,525

Thus Methodism has built seven times as many churches this last twenty-three years as she did during the first quarter of a century. Counting those that take the place of the old ones, she has built nearly two a

month, and has laid upon the altar for that purpose over $1,500 a week, or $250 a day.

Not only have the churches built during the last period been much more numerous, but with the help of the Church Extension Board she has been able to build better churches.

CHAPTER XXV.

FOURTH PERIOD. (1880-1904.)

METHODISM AND EDUCATION.

It is characteristic of the spirit of Methodism that among the first things the Church thought of and planned for was a great Christian institution to be called "Simpson University," to be located in the city of Omaha. During the first session of the Nebraska Territorial Legislature, in the winter of 1855, the following charter was procured:

AN ACT

To incorporate Simpson University.

Section 1. Be it enacted by the Council and House of Representatives of the Territory of Nebraska, that Rev. W. H. Goode, J. H. Hopkins, W. D. Gage, Charles Elliott, Moses F. Shinn, Thomas Benton, Jr., O. B. Selden, John B. Robinson, Mark W. Izzard, Thomas B. Cuming, Charles B. Smith, W. N. Byers, and J. P. Buckingham, with their associates and successors, be, and are hereby erected a body politic and corporate, by the name and style of Simpson University, at Omaha, Nebraska. For the present the aforesaid individuals shall constitute a Board of Trustees.

Sec. 2. The object of said corporation shall be the promotion of the general interests of education, and to qualify students to engage in the several pursuits and

employments of society, and to discharge honorably and usefully the various duties of life.

That this action was taken prior to the organization of the Church in Omaha or anywhere else in the Territory, as is probable, and before a single church or parsonage building had been erected, and when there were not to exceed 300 members in the entire Territory of Nebraska, is creditable as indicating the interest the Church always took in the work of Christian education. And that this enterprise was not merely local, is shown by the following report which was adopted at the first session of the Kansas and Nebraska Conference, in October, 1856:

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

Your Committee to whom was referred the subject of education in this Conference, have had the same under consideration, and beg leave to present the following as their report:

We are gratified in being able to present to this Conference the fact that our brethren in Nebraska Territory have taken such initiatory steps as to secure the passage of an act of incorporation for the "Simpson University," located at or near Omaha City, the capital of Nebraska Territory, and that the trustees of said institution have been presented with the generous donation of fifty acres of ground, from Rev. Moses F. Shinn, of the Iowa Annual Conference, now residing in Omaha, and twenty-five acres more, from Hon. T. B. Cuming, secretary of the Territory of Nebraska, lying adjacent to the town plat of Omaha City, now worth not less than one hundred dollars per acre, as the permanent site of the university,

and for university purposes; and the title to the same will be confirmed to the said Board of Trustees for that object; therefore,

Resolved, First, That each presiding elder be requested and is hereby instructed and authorized by this Conference, to give especial attention to the subject of education, and where lands and tenements can be secured by donation for educational purposes they take such measures as may be necessary to secure, in fee simple, such lands for sites of seminaries or universities, and their building and endowment by legislative action and otherwise.

Second. That as a Conference we will co-operate with the Board of Trustees of Simpson University as far as practicable in their efforts to establish and sustain a first-class university at Omaha City, Nebraska Territory, by our patronage and otherwise.

I. F. COLLINS, *Chairman.*

Defective titles and consequent litigation defeated this first enterprise.

Another enterprise was projected in 1857 at Oreapolis, just south of the Platte, and near its mouth. Besides the indorsement of the Conference, Oreapolis Seminary had the backing of some of the wisest and strongest men of Methodism outside the Territory, among them Professor George Loomis, a leading educator, and Hon. John Evans, who had already borne a conspicuous part in the founding of Evanston, Illinois, which was named after him, and the establishment of the great Northwestern University at that place, and who was afterward Governor of Colorado, and contributed largely to the found-

ing of Denver University. Even Dr. John Dempster, first president of Garrett Biblical School, proposed to become responsible for a theological school as a department if ten students could be found. But these men themselves soon saw that the enterprise was premature and withdrew, and soon after, the Conference withdrawing its support, the school was abandoned.

Though this second effort proved abortive, the Conference still maintained the receptive mood assumed as we have seen at the first session of their Conference, with standing instructions to pastors and presiding elders to be on the lookout for opportunities to locate an institution of learning. And if propositions from ambitious towns inviting the Church to locate its educational institution in their community could be regarded as opportunities, there were many such in the first twenty-five years of her history. But in almost every case this very ambition defeated the project by insisting that the institution should be a university or, at the very least, a college.

A typical case of this kind was the proposition from Peru, under the leadership of Rev. H. Burch, the pastor, backed by the Church and the leading citizens of the place. A generous offer was made on condition that the Church would establish a school of college grade. This the Conference refused to do deeming such an undertaking premature and unwise, but offered to accept the proposition on the basis of an institution of seminary grade. But as the subscriptions of the people of Peru had been made on the basis of a college, the citizens declined the Conference proposal and offered their bonus to the State for the establishment of a normal school, and it was accepted.

There are few places of any importance in the eastern portion of the State which did not during the first twenty-five years make a definite proposition of some kind, or were in some way considered in relation to the location of a school. Many private enterprises were begun by Methodist ministers or laymen, and these were constantly knocking at the door of the Conference for adoption as Conference schools, or at least some kind of recognition. Among these private enterprises may be mentioned the Nemaha Collegiate Institute, by Professor J. M. McKenzie, who afterward served the State as State Superintendent of Instruction, and the Church in connection with York College; a seminary at Nebraska City, by Rev. P. T. Kenney; at Factoryville, on the Weeping Water, by Mrs. Nichols; at Fremont, by Rev. Mendenhall; at Osceola, Rev. J. J. Fleharty established Nebraska Wesleyan University, which, on the location of the seminary at York, he removed to Fullerton. Having failed to secure adoption by the Nebraska Conference, he still hoped he might find favor with the North Nebraska Conference, but in this he also failed, and the Fullerton school was abandoned when the Central City School was established.

Professor J. M. McKenzie,

First Principal of State Normal School, and second State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Thus there was scarcely a session of the Conference that this matter of the duty of the Church to establish a school of some kind was not considered. In 1870, in order evidently immediately to affect something along

this line the following action was taken: "That a committee of six members be appointed to receive applications for the location of one or two schools, to be under the control and patronage of the Conference, but for which no financial responsibility shall be assumed, said committee to report at the State Convention" (which had been provided for). Not being ready to report at the convention the committee obtained leave to report to the succeeding Conference at Lincoln, which they did as follows: "Propositions have been received from Papillion, Bellevue, Lincoln, Pawnee City, Weeping Water, and Ashland, each of which has its advantages." Of these it was decided that the choice lay between Ashland and Bellevue. In view of existing numerical and financial conditions it was still deemed inexpedient to attempt to locate a college, but nine trustees were appointed and empowered to accept propositions for a seminary. But at the session of 1872 the trustees reported that no acceptable proposition had been received. They were continued and instructed to meet at the Methodist church at Lincoln on the first Tuesday of the following October, and if practicable make final choice of a location. This Board was compelled to report to the Conference of 1873 that they had not been able to fix on any location for a Conference seminary, but it was resolved "that we will never cease our efforts to build an institution of learning, such as the times demand, until crowned with abundant success."

REV. J. J. FLEHARTY, A. M.,
Pioneer Educator.

But before that success was achieved the dreadful grasshopper scourge of 1874-77 intervened, making the postponement of the long-cherished object to a later date necessary.

In 1879, however, the Conference established a seminary at York, Nebraska, with Rev. E. Thomson as principal. Thus, while Nebraska Methodism had from the first year of its organized existence watched prayerfully and carefully for an opportunity to establish an institution of learning and actually made one attempt, and entertained a large number of propositions from ambitious towns, the Church did not really, in an official way, adopt an institution till its membership had reached above ten thousand and the population of the State had reached 450,000. This seeming failure during the first twenty-five years of her history to formally enter the educational field, was not the result of indifference, or a want of appreciation of its importance, but all efforts prior to 1879 were premature, the population and membership being insufficient in numbers, and what there were being incapable by reason of financial limitations to sustain even a seminary. But from now on she has had from one to three in the field.

Rev. R. N. McKaig, President of York College.

York Seminary continued to prosper, and in 1883 the grade was raised to that of college. In 1885 Rev. R. N. McKaig, D. D., succeeded Dr. Thomson as president.

In 1884, three years after its organization, the North Nebraska Conference appointed J. B. Maxfield, N. H. Gale, D. Marquette, J. L. St. Clair, William Worley, J. Fowler, J. B. Leedom, a commission with power to act, and instructed them to locate and establish a seminary within ninety days. The commission met at Fremont, and from a number of propositions accepted the one from Central City, and established a seminary. A building worth $10,000 was erected, and Rev. J. B. Maxfield, D. D., was elected president.

In 1885, by the action of the Conference, it was raised to the grade of a college, and named Nebraska Central College.

The institution prospered, and the attendance increased from about thirty the first year to one hundred and fifty at one time. In 1887, Dr. J. B. Maxfield resigned the presidency on account of broken health and D. Marquette was elected to succeeed him. But the task proved too much for his physical strength, and he, too, was compelled to resign in 1888, and was succeeded by Rev. J. W. Shenk. He soon resigned and was followed by Rev. H. A. Crane, and he by F. W. Ware.

In 1886 Rev. Allen Bartley and others founded the town of Bartley in the Republican Valley, and established Mallalieu University, with a view to its ultimate adoption by the West Nebraska Conference, and Edward Thomson was called to the presidency. While it was never formally adopted by the West Nebraska Conference, it was so far recognized as to be authorized to send representatives to the commission that was to unify the educational interests of the State.

UNIFICATION.

Thus in 1886, there were three colleges, one in each Conference, struggling for existence. The York and Central City institutions were within thirty-five miles of each other, and each was burdened with debt, and being Conference schools were limited to their respective Conferences for patronage and support. The struggle seemed hopeless and the prospect for building up a strong, high-grade institution of learning, worthy of the Church of John Wesley, seemed to many remote, if ever attainable. Mallalieu, while possessing a pretentious title, had not even been formally adopted by the Church.

This was the educational situation when Bishop Fowler came into the State to preside over the three Conferences then existing. He found that Nebraska Methodism was already the victim of a tendency to the undue multiplication of institutions, each Conference insisting on having its own high-grade school of learning. This makes it impossible for either to realize the best results in the establishment of a strong institution.

Bishop Fowler proceeded to lay the matter before the three Nebraska Conferences over which he presided. The result was the following concurrent action, which originated in the North Nebraska Conference, that being held first that year, and was adopted by the other two:

Resolved, That while there is so much reason for rejoicing because of zeal for our educational interests, we also desire to guard against the disaster sure to come from undue multiplication, within narrow territorial limits, of institutions of learning of the same grade; and, in order to secure the unification of our educational work in the State of Nebraska, therefore we, as a Conference,

request our presiding bishop to appoint a committee of five, to act with a committee of the same number from each of the other Nebraska Conferences together with Bishops C. H. Fowler, Thos. Bowman, H. W. Warren, and C. D. Foss, as a joint commission, to take such action toward this unification as they may deem proper. And we also request Bishop Fowler, as chairman of said committee, to invite this suggested action on the part of these Conferences and the co-operation of these aforementioned bishops.

Resolved, That the Board of Trustees of Nebraska Central College be requested to appoint three of their number to represent them in the commission to consider the unification of our educational work in the State of Nebraska.

Besides the four bishops named, the following persons were appointed on the commission:

CONFERENCES.

Representing the North Nebraska Conference: Rev. J. W. Shenk, Rev. J. W. Phelps, Rev. A. Hodgetts, L. H. Rogers, A. J. Anderson.

Representing the West Nebraska Conference: Rev. T. B. Lemon, D. D., Rev. L. Stevens, Rev. W. C. Wilson, Rev. G. W. Martin, Rev. P. C. Johnson.

Representing the Nebraska Conference: Rev. W. G. Miller, D. D., Rev. C. F. Creighton, D. D., Rev. H. T. Davis, Hon. J. W. Small, Hon. C. C. White.

COLLEGES.

Representing the "Nebraska Central College:" Rev. J. B. Maxfield, D. D., Rev. David Marquette, Hon. N. R. Persinger.

Representing "Mallalieu University" Rev. L. H. Eddleblute, Rev. Jas. Leonard, Rev. Allen Bartley.

Representing the "Methodist Episcopal College of Nebraska:" Rev. R. N. McKaig, F. K. Atkins, F. L. Mayhew.

The Commission met at the call of Bishop Fowler, at Lincoln, Nebraska, December 15th, and continued in session three days. All the members were present, including Bishops Bowman and Warren. Bishops Fowler and Foss could not be present. The following telegram explains the absence of Bishop Fowler: "Chicago, Illinois, December 16, 1886.—Two days lost by two derailings. Baggage just in from wreck. Can not reach you. Very sorry."

Bishop Bowman was elected chairman of the commission.

After a careful consideration of all the interests involved, the following plan of unification was adopted:

PLAN OF AGREEMENT FOR THE UNIFICATION OF OUR COLLEGES IN A UNIVERSITY IN NEBRASKA.

First.—That trustees, to be hereafter appointed, secure a charter for a university to include as contributory or allied institutions the schools and colleges at present or hereafter coming under the control of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Nebraska.

Second.—That all schools or colleges, which are now or may hereafter become the property of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Nebraska shall be under the control of the University trustees, but all the property, real, personal, or mixed, shall be held and controlled by their own local boards of trustees.

Third.—The first Board of University Trustees shall consist of seven trustees, from within the boundaries of each Conference in Nebraska to be appointed by this commission, and approved by the several Conferences to which they belong, and that hereafter the trustees shall consist of seven persons from each and every Conference, elected in four annual classes by their respective Conferences. The persons thus elected by the several Conferences shall constitute the local boards of the several colleges within the bounds of their respective Conferences.

These several local boards of trustees to hold and control the property of each college as above provided, and each local board may nominate so many additional members as each separate Conference may determine to elect, who, in addition to said local board, shall perform the duties of said local trustees.

Fourth.—Duties of the University and College Trustees.

(a) The University Trustees to have and hold all property belonging to the University proper, and to manage the affairs of the same.

(b) To determine the course of study, text books to be used, systems of grading, and to do all such other work as appertains to the general educational interests of the allied colleges. Providing that each college elect its own faculty and arrange for its own internal discipline.

All other powers remain with the local boards of trustees as defined by their charters and by-laws.

Fifth.—Any school or college existent, or that may come under the charter of the University, shall be en-

titled to retain its college name, to acquire property to be held for the benefit of such college, to teach regular preparatory and collegiate studies, as far as the end of sophomore year of the university course, and to confer academic and normal degrees. The colleges of the university shall have the same courses of study, use the same text-books, and students of one college shall be entitled to enter the same grade and rank in any college of the university, on certificate of standing, without examination.

Amendment to Article Fifth.

The clause in Art. 5 of the above which reads, "as far as the end of the sophomore year," etc., shall be understood to be so interpreted that any college of this university may be graded in its classical curriculum in every detail, so that its classical senior year of graduation shall not be graded higher than the end of the sophomore year of the classical course of the university.

The following addition was adopted:

The Board of Trustees shall make the grade of the university equal to that of any Methodist university in the United States.

Wesleyan University.

Having traced the steps by which, by a process of evolution, this institution came into being, the plan under which it was founded, the subsequent history of its growth and development, contains so much of thrilling interest and far-reaching influence, that a somewhat detailed treatment seems justified.

Broadly speaking, it may be said that the first ten or twelve years of her history covered a period of as many

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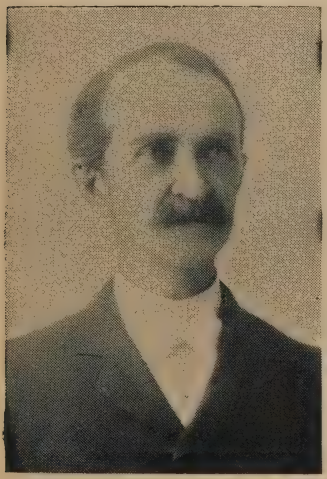
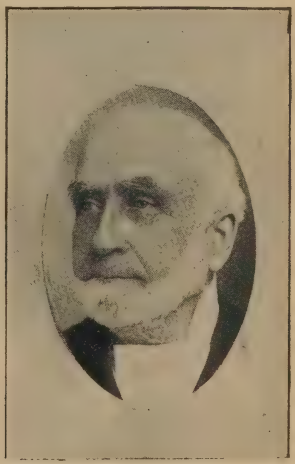
First Chancellor.



ISAAC CROOK, D. D.
Second Chancellor.

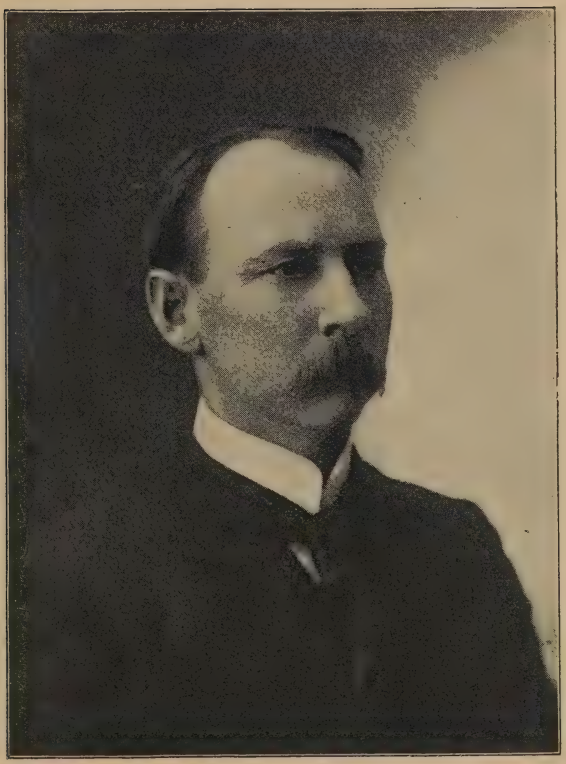


D. W. C. HUNTINGTON, D. D.
Present Chancellor.

and as great financial difficulties as any of our schools have ever been called to face. We began at the close of an unprecedented boom, in which all values were enormously inflated, and the notions of nearly all men were even still more inflated. While the original proposition included a $50,000 building to be erected and paid for by the people of Lincoln, local pride, and the still prevailing boom ideas, led to the selection of a plan costing $70,000. It was still thought we could realize on some real estate enough over and above the bonus offered to provide for the extra $20,000. But after the contract was let, and the building was in process of construction, it was found that the boom had spent itself, the reaction had set in, the bottom fell out, and everybody wanted to sell and no one wanted to buy. This sudden and unexpected turn in the tide made it more difficult for the Lincoln people to collect or pay their pledges for the building fund, or for the trustees to realize on the real estate set apart for the extra $20,000. Money for building ceased to come in, and local banks refused to advance any more. A crisis of such seriousness was reached that a meeting of the Board of Trustees was hastily called. The greatness of the peril found expression in the language of the following telegram from Dr. Creighton to Bishop Warren, a member of the board: "We are hanging by the eyelids, be sure and come." When the trustees met and the situation was considered, the emergency, while serious, was not thought to be one arising from the lack of ultimate resources, but a temporary inability to raise the cash needed to finish the building. With 800 lots contiguous to the campus, valued at an average of not less than $300, and several

GOVERNOR J. H. MICKEY.
PRESIDENT BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

thousand dollars worth of lots in Peck's Grove and other parts of the city, over and above the Lincoln pledge of $50,000, it was thought that the emergency could be met by the purchase by the trustees and others of enough of these lots, and giving their notes, secured by these, and thus furnish paper that could be used as collateral security, and on this get the banks to carry them through financially. No doubt was entertained that if we had time we could realize enough cash out of sales of real estate at these boom prices to pay the balance needed over and above Lincoln's $50,000. The emergency was promptly met in this way by Bishop Warren generously offering to secure a loan of $5,000, and also to purchase $5,000 worth of real estate, on condition that the other members of the board make purchases as they were able. This they all did, and the means to finish the building was thus secured, but at the financial loss of every investor, there never having been a time since, until now, that they could have gotten half what was paid by them for their lots. Nor could the extra lots be sold. The result was that instead of starting out in our career with a building paid for, as contemplated, we were about $25,000 in debt, the one cause of all our subsequent troubles. Like thousands of others at that time, it seemed impossible for the trustees to divest themselves of the notion that the boom prices were to continue forever, and all our plans involving the expenditure of money were made on that basis. When we could and did appraise our lots at an average of $300 per lot, making a total valuation of $240,000, there did not seem to be any demand for rigid economy, but the face of the facts seemed to justify a liberal policy. Hence we at the first fixed the chancellor's



J. M. STEWART
SECRETARY.

salary at $3,000, and the other members of the Faculty at about $1,000 to $1,200. It may be safely said that few other Methodist institutions ever started out on such a munificent scale.

But the tide had turned and was moving in an adverse direction at a rapid rate. It soon became impossible to transform our real estate into productive endowment, as was contemplated, and as might readily have been done but for the unforeseen bursting of the boom and consequent depreciation of our real estate along with all other of like nature, until it became unsalable at any price. A lingering faith in the outcome induced many of the faculty to take our lots in part payment of salaries, but in spite of this generous action, there was an increasing deficit from year to year, which added to the nine per cent interest we were paying on our notes, the debts kept growing, and soon passed the limit of $25,000, as fixed by the charter. In the meanwhile the financial situation throughout the country was growing worse. Banks were breaking in every direction, and many private individuals and firms were going under. Cotner University, of the Christian denomination, established a year after Wesleyan, and about a mile distant, was compelled to go into bankruptcy, and the Episcopal Church deemed it inexpedient to rebuild their school after its loss by fire. The remarkable thing about this whole matter is, not that a debt was contracted, and allowed to grow to alarming proportions, but that under the awful stress of financial storm under which her infancy and youth were passed during the first ten or twelve years of her history, that she weathered the storm, was kept in the field and up to a high grade of efficiency, and the debt kept down to a

REV. E. E. HOSMAN.
FINANCIAL SECRETARY, 1900–1901.

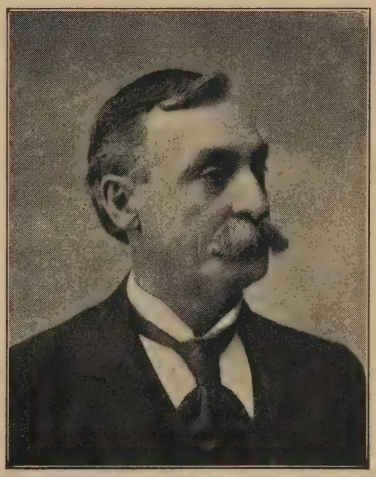
manageable point, so that at the first opportunity, when a changed financial condition made it possible, the debt could be and was paid.

In this connection historical justice requires that the chief factors in this glorious consummation should be mentioned, being Dr. D. W. C. Huntington, Chancellor; Gov. J. H. Mickey, who besides giving $6,000, gave much of his time in personal canvass of the State, and Bishop McCabe. Besides these, E. E. Hosman rendered valuable service as Financial Secretary, and Mrs. C. C. White, who gave $5,100. Under the inspiration of this leadership and this giving the Methodists of Nebraska were led to lay upon the altar enough to pay the last penny of the old indebtedness, and under the efficient leadership of Field Secretary Dr. G. W. Isham has since paid every dollar of its current expenses, besides making many needed improvements and repairs. There have also been erected and paid for at a cost of $7,000, a heating plant and gymnasium and botanical conservatory. Then there is now in

GEORGE W. ISHAM, D. D.
Field Secretary and Treasurer.

process of construction a Conservatory of Music to cost, when completed, $50,000, one wing of which is now completed and paid for at a cost of $16,000.

The financial history of this great institution would not be complete without the mention of the fact that through the influence of Bishop Warren, Jacob Haish, who had already given $50,000 to build and equip a manual training school for Denver University, was induced to do likewise for Nebraska Wesleyan University. Accordingly a fine building was erected for this purpose on the campus. Negotiations for the insurance were held with different insurance companies for the proper insurance of this building, but the rates demanded seemed so exorbitant that those responsible for this part of the business hesitated to pay the rates. This happened to be a case where to hesitate was to be lost. For unhappily, before any agreement could be reached and the property insured, it took fire from some unknown cause and was entirely destroyed.



C. C. White.
Former President Board of Trustees.

There was some talk of rebuilding the "Haish," but as Mr. Haish himself naturally declined to furnish the money, the pressure of debt and adverse financial conditions made the project impossible.

But financial and moral confidence have been seemingly completely restored, and the future of Nebraska Wesleyan is assured, and her expanding needs in the way of additional endowments and additional buildings will in due time be met by the generous men and women who are interested in the cause of Christian education.

After this somewhat detailed statement of the financial and material side of this history, which in the nature of things must always be a very important feature in the early periods of the existence of such institutions, when income is small and expenses are great, often involving from a quarter to a half a century of struggle, seems justified by the unique conditions through which we have reached the final victory. It is due, however, to the Board of Trustees to say that at the very first every precaution possible was taken to start the institution out on its career free of debt arising from any expense of building, and the creation of productive endowment through the sale of lots and pledges from the people such as would amply provide for the payment of current expenses. That these expectations and plans were not realized was no fault of the trustees, but was the result of changes in conditions that no one but the Omniscient could foresee.

The other phases of Wesleyan's history may be briefly summed up. Dr. Charles F. Creighton seemed to many, when the plan was consummated, to be the ideal man to serve as chancellor, and put the plan in operation.

Accordingly he was elected the first chancellor, and proceeded with vigor and enthusiasm to inaugurate the great enterprise. In many respects he was well suited to the work. He was certainly a great preacher, with no little ability as an organizer. He had a great opportunity, and realized it, and seemed determined to make the most of it. But just at that juncture there was needed at the head of affairs a man, that while vigorously pushing the inauguration of the new plan should also in marked degree possess a spirit and tact calculated to bring into line the doubting ones and conciliate the antagonistic. Neither of these did Dr. Creighton possess in such measure as to enable him to meet this demand under the conditions then prevailing. After several years of strenuous, and in many ways, successful, effort in behalf of the school, he in June, 1893, resigned, and the following August Dr. Isaac Crook was elected Chancellor.

Dr. Crook was a dignified, cultured, and scholarly man, and as such was pre-eminently an educator. He was well adapted to manage the internal affairs of an institution already established and endowed, and did introduce a number of improvements in the methods of work. He also did much to allay the feeling of bitterness aroused during the preceding years. The work that was urgently needed at that time was not at all to his taste, and Dr. Crook gracefully retired after three years of honorable and efficient service along the lines for which he was adapted, leaving the institution in much better condition in many ways than he found it. He was soon called to the honorable position of president of the Ohio State University.

After an interregnum of two years, during which

matters went rapidly from bad to worse, the Ellinwood defalcation being detected about that time, we found right in our midst the man for the hour, in the person of Dr. D. W. C. Huntington, who was elected Chancellor. After many years of distinguished service in the old Genesee Conference, in New York, which sent him several times as one of her delegates to the General Conference, he was transferred to Nebraska Conference in October, 1891, to take charge of the new and promising Trinity Church enterprise in Lincoln. It is a high compliment to Dr. Huntington that at a great crisis, when the school needed a wise man to save it from its financial perils, and restore the confidence and respect of the public, lost through the defalcations of its trusted treasurer, C. M. Ellinwood, all turned spontaneously to him as the one man whose wisdom could guide us safely through the financial breakers, and whose high moral character, which had become recognized throughout the entire State, could reinstate our institution in the confidence of the people, which must be done if we were to live at all. At a meeting of the trustees, called for the purpose of electing a chancellor, immediately after convening, and without waiting for a nomination by any committee, Dr. Huntington was unanimously elected chancellor, notwithstanding he himself earnestly protested against the action.

It is not too much to say that this was a turning point in the history of the Nebraska Wesleyan University, and that ever since the tide has moved steadily in the direction of increasing prosperity, confidence has been not only entirely regained, but is to-day greater than it has even been.

While it was intended that the other schools should

keep in the field as subordinate departments of the University, confining themselves chiefly to preparatory work, though allowed at their option to carry that work as far as the sophomore year of the university course, attention and effort were so largely concentrated on the new enterprise as to operate to the immediate disadvantage of all the others. Besides, the immediate patronizing territory of the York College, the oldest and strongest, coincided with that on which the new institution must mainly depend. Then there was naturally a feeling of disappointment that York should not have been made the one university, but instead, her grade was reduced virtually to that of a seminary. Added to this wounded pride, and discouragement incident to defeat, hard times set in and many who had pledged help or had been in the habit of doing so, refused to pay old pledges or make new ones, on the score that the conditions had changed and there was no use trying to keep up the subordinate schools. The conditions resulted in the closing of both the York and Central City schools in a few years.

Two preparatory schools were afterward adopted by the University, one at Douglas, within thirty miles of Lincoln, and one at Orleans. The first soon died because it ought never to have been. The one at Orleans supplied a real need for all the southwestern part of the State and deserved success. It flourished a few years under the principalship of Prof. J. L. McBrien, but succumbed to the adverse financial conditions caused by general depression, and especially by the drouth.

This left the entire field to the Nebraska Wesleyan University, and nobly has she done the work. Under the successive chancellorships of Drs. C. F. Creighton,

Isaac Crook, and D. W. C. Huntington, a steady growth has been maintained. Beginning with less than one hundred students, the number has increased to over seven hundred at present.

Allusion has been made to the defalcation of our treasurer, and as this sad fact has been much misunderstood historical justice requires a brief statement of the occurrence. Professor Ellinwood was among the first men elected to our Faculty, he coming to us from Simpson Centenary College, in Iowa, and taking charge of the department of natural science. He was a master in his department, and would have succeeded had he not gone into banking and other business projects, by which he became involved financially. He was withal an expert accountant, and such was the implicit confidence all had in his business and moral integrity, that he was soon made deputy treasurer, and afterward treasurer. Doubtless this confidence in his honesty and skill as an accountant made the Board of Trustees less careful in auditing his accounts, and his confidence in his own ability as an accountant tempted him to abuse this sacred confidence of his brethren and to begin and carry on a series of frauds which he skillfully kept covered up for years, deceiving not only the trustees, but also the officials of different banks, among which were the First National of Lincoln, a leading bank in Burlington, Iowa, and Windom Bank of University Place. He was tried and expelled from the ministry and membership of the Methodist Church, but escaped criminal prosecution on the part of the authorities of the State. While the defalcation was at first about $34,000, Ellinwood turned over certain properties which reduced the loss to $27,000, and by equitable ad-

justments made by the trustees with the several banks involved, the net loss to the University was reduced to about $7,500, or less than one-fourth of the original amount.

In the meanwhile, through all these changes and varying experiences, the school was doing most excellent work, being able to keep in the field an able corps of teachers. The attendance has steadily increased almost from the first, beginning with niney-six the first year, and reaching the present year over seven hundred. There has been a total of 179 graduates from the College of Liberal Arts. The normal department has for a number of years been among the few normal schools that have measured up to the demands of the State, and received for its graduates from the State superintendent, State certificates on an equality with the State Normal school at Peru.

Indeed all the departments have been well manned from the first, the course of study comparing favorably with that of our best institutions. Even in the more expensive departments, as in the chemical laboratory, improvements have constantly been made and the latest appliances have been procured.

The tract of ground surrounding the campus which fifteen years ago was farm land, has grown to be a thrifty village of nearly, or quite, 2,000 inhabitants. While virtually a suburb of Lincoln, with street car service every fifteen minutes, and a five-cent fare to any part of the city, they have wisely maintained their own separate municipal government, rigidly excluding all places of vice, thus protecting the students from the degrading influences which prevail in our cities and many of our villages.

Not only in this negative way have the youth who flock to the Nebraska Wesleyan for instruction been protected from positive immoral influences, but there has grown up a strong Methodist Church with over eight hundred members, being the second largest church in the State. But not only is it strong numerically, but it is one of the most spiritual Churches in the Connection. A Church that maintains its spiritual power throughout the year, where at every testimony meeting two to five are on their feet at once waiting their turn to speak, and where revivals are liable to break out spontaneously at any time, and seekers after salvation present themselves at the altar for prayers. Where vigorous means of grace for the intelligent culture and development of Christian experience and character exist in a high state of efficiency, and all the modern departments of a Methodist working Church are in operation.

While it is true that the conversion of a youth in one of our city, village, or rural Churches, may be said to double the probability of that youth seeking an education at Wesleyan or elsewhere, so that over fifty per cent of the students that enter all our institutions of learning, including State schools, and about eighty per cent of those coming to Wesleyan are professing Christians when entering these schools, it is also true that the twenty per cent of unconverted that come to Wesleyan are three times more likely to be converted there than they would if they had staid at home. If twenty per cent enter Wesleyan unconverted, only two per cent of those graduating remain unconverted.

If Nebraska Methodism was slow about getting at its educational work, it has finally solved the problem of

Christian education in a most satisfactory way by the establishment of an ideal school, surrounding it by a highly moral community, and supplementing the powerful influences of the school itself by a strong spiritual Church, thus creating well-nigh perfect conditions under which our youth may secure an education.

Among the laymen mentioned in connection with our Wesleyan, and who are worthy of further mention, is J. H. Mickey. Even before his elevation to the place of Chief Magistrate of the State, he was one of the best known and highly honored laymen of the State. This is because John H. Mickey always gave evidence of a genuine piety, everywhere, and under all circumstances, "witnessing a good confession," and living a pure life. And under all circumstances the Church has found in him a true friend, ready to help up to the extent of his ability. And though he has been prosperous, both as a farmer and banker, and later in politics, this prosperity has never diminished his devotion to Christ and His Church.

After serving his country during the war as a member of an Iowa Regiment of Volunteer Cavalry, he came to Nebraska in 1869, settling on a homestead in Polk County, and at the organization of the county, soon after, he was appointed county treasurer, to which position he was afterwards elected a number of terms.

It is characteristic of this devoted layman, that Father Query, the local preacher who planted Methodism in Polk County, found a hearty welcome to the home of John H. Mickey, where he organized the first class in that county, and that Wm. Worley should report that out of the eleven dollars received on the West Blue Mission in 1869, J. H. Mickey paid five, and that during a

great revival held at Osceola, by J. Q. A. Fleharty, J. H. Mickey was one of the most earnest and efficient lay workers, leading his friends and neighbors to Christ.

It may be truthfully said that every Methodist pastor that has served the Church at Osceola has found in Brother Mickey a true personal friend, and in some cases that friendship has continued to the pastor's family, after he has died. The first time the writer met Governor Mickey to know him was just after the death of S. P. Van Doozer, who had been his pastor at Osceola, and he was then busy settling up the estate, endeavoring to save as much as possible for the widow and fatherless children.

These and other incidents that might be mentioned, occurring before he came into prominence in Church and State, best show his true character, and explain in part why he has come into prominence.

Perhaps the moral and religious sides of his character are too pronounced and are too rigidly applied to the affairs of State to suit the average politician, but his upright principles and downright honesty suit the Methodists, and indeed, all other decent people who believe in an honest administration of the affairs of the State. We think all the more of him because he has not allowed any one to use him, and has never apologized for being a Christian.

He has twice been elected lay delegate to the General Conference, and ever since the death of C. C. White, he has, from year to year, been the unanimous choice of the Trustees of the Nebraska Wesleyan for President of the Board.

The Board of Trustees of the Nebraska Wesleyan

University has had no more faithful and influential member than J. M. Stewart, who has been on the Board for many years. Though a leading lawyer of Lincoln, with a large practice, he still finds it possible, or makes it possible, to give much time to the affairs of the university. It was largely due to his legal services that the institution was able to save so much out of the loss caused by the Ellinwood defalcation.

It would be safe to say that besides much generous giving directly, his legal services, the charge for which, if any, has been merely nominal, have saved the institution many thousands of dollars.

C. C. White is another one of those strong laymen who not only rendered valuable service to Nebraska Wesleyan at the time of its sorest need, but was a tower of strength in the Church, and indeed, in all the walks of life. Few men have touched humanity in more varied and helpful ways than C. C. White. But I feel that another pen will be far more able to do justice to this unique character, unique, not in the sense of oddity or eccentricity, but of a rare and well-proportioned combination of well-nigh all the virtues.

But Dr. Isaac Crook, who came to know him in their close official relations to Nebraska Wesleyan, shall speak for me: "The outward story of his life need not be long—true with all of us. He was born in Sylvania, near Toledo, Ohio, February 24, 1843, and attended the common schools, also a local academy, till eighteen years of age. He intended to become a teacher, but instead enlisted in the Ninth Illinois Cavalry, and for three years had the stern schooling of war—in camp-life and battle, and for seven months in prison at Libby and Belle Isle.

Exchanged, he returned to his regiment and served out the term of his enlistment. In 1864 he settled near Raymond, Nebraska, and engaged in farming, to support his widowed mother and sisters. January 19, 1868, he married a teacher, Miss Olive A. Johnson, of Valparaiso. In this marriage he found a helper in every excellence and a large part of his life success.

"His intimate friends, such as saw most of his real life, are his greatest admirers. Incidental glimpses, when he could not be on guard, showed him at his best. The real man grows on one by careful observation. It may indicate how deeply and widely rooted was his life, when we recall but his official relations. At home he was class-leader, president of the Church Board of Trustees, leader of the choir, Sunday-school superintendent, president of the Young Men's Christian Association, president of the Board of Education; and he attended to all of them. He had been president of the State Millers' Association; was, at the time of his death, president of the Veterans of the Ninth Illinois Cavalry, member of the Board of the Central State Sunday-school Convention, president of the Crete Chautauqua Assembly, and president of the Board of Trustees of the Nebraska Wesleyan University. He attended to these several duties cheerfully and systematically, without hurtful neglect of private business or domestic life. Surely he must have been highly endowed with executive ability and inspired with great philanthropy.

"He was a Methodist theoretically and practically; but many of his sweetest, most sacred fellowships were in Churches differing from his own most radically. His love was too large for denominational fences. His cor-

respondence, and the letters of sympathy written after his death, reveal a widespread feeling of esteem, amounting, as one says, 'to a sentiment akin to reverence.' These tribute-bearing letters are from clergymen, educators, lawyers, physicians, merchants, millers, grain-dealers, pastors of congregations in and out of his State, from East and West, North and South. But the most significant of all come from the unfortunate. Little wonder, when we remember that he once said to his wife: 'How can I sleep when there is under our roof a broken heart!' It was the heart-break of a hired girl. Or he would say: 'I must at least go and shake hands with the people in that prairie schooner and speak an encouraging word.' Or when a transient hired man would be overcome with drink, he would try the man again, saying: 'Were I in his place I might have done no better.' One such man was under his care when he died; and a poor Bohemian woman, on hearing of his death, sat down in the street, crying, as she said: 'I 've lost the best friend I had in the world.' One closest to him in his office says, 'There was scarcely a day without his giving relief privately.'

"His gentleness did not mean weakness. His was not the pliability of the willow, but of the palm, which bends to the zephyr, yet withstands the simoon. Men who undertook to dislodge from a right position by bribes or threats, found cause for humiliation and shame. That mild, blue eye could flash fire, and that kind face be set as a helmet of steel. Though generous in his interpretations of men's motives, he read character accurately. Like the Master, he condemned and forgave the sins of weakness for which men were sorry, but his wrath was unsparing towards hypocrisy.

"The great honor of being the spiritual guide of Mr. White and his wife fell to Rev. H. T. Davis, D. D. First, he was their guest at Raymond, and, like sensible people, they talked frankly on religion. In a year Davis returned as presiding elder. Before he came Mr. White said, 'Wife, I fear I can't hold out much longer against Elder Davis's preaching.' 'I also feel that way,' she said. After the sermon on the following Sabbath night, invitation was given for enquirers to go forward for prayer. His wife said, 'Let us go.' He replied, 'Do you wish to?' 'Yes.' 'All right.' And to that humble school-house altar they went, and again were united in a holier bond than ever. Here, as often, the wife was the leader, while he was a willing follower and companion. She soon found peace that floweth like a river. He held resolutely on, going three nights in succession, when he, too, entered into peace, and said, 'Glory, glory, hallelujah!' Now, after twenty-three years of service, he is with the innumerable company whose hallelujahs never end.

"He was elected senator for Saunders County in 1880. During the same year he was honored as delegate to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, held at Cincinnati. He moved to Crete, Nebraska, in 1888, where, as an enterprising leader in the milling business, he prospered and became a blessing to the city and State. After a brief illness, he died, September 20, 1895, just as he had come to the riper years of full maturity."

Mrs. C. C. White, the widow of this true nobleman, whom he always regarded as his equal and companion, was in hearty sympathy with her husband in what he was doing for Wesleyan, and along other benevolent

lines, and finds pleasure in carrying out his wishes as well as her own, in the generous contribution of $5,000 to pay the debt. To her, in pursuit of the same purpose, is largely due the stately new structure, the conservatory of music, one wing of which is now approaching completion, as well as timely assistance in other improvements.

A. L. Johnson, the business partner of C. C. White in the milling business at Crete, is another one of the true-hearted laymen who have proved to Wesleyan a "friend indeed," because a "friend in need," who, besides contributing largely to the payment of the debt, has generously aided the erection and furnishing of the new gymnasium, and also of the conservatory. He is an influential member of the Board of Trustees, and a member of the Executive Committee, giving much valuable time to the interests of the university.

Regarding the general subject of education, Nebraska Methodism, in common with other evangelical denominations, with the exception of the Roman Catholic, holds uncompromisingly to these views:

First, that every human being is entitled to the best education possible, and that no education is complete that ignores the moral and religious elements in human nature.

Second, that the Church and State, having different functions, are to be separate.

The first of these requires that the State, especially in the case of a free Republic, provide through a public school system, supported by taxation, an opportunity for every boy and girl to be educated. But the second restricts the State from exercising the function of the Church in carrying on and directing the religious feature of this education.

That is, we say to the State, it is your duty to educate the people, but in doing so you must leave out the most important elements.

Few, except the Catholics, question the practical soundness of these seemingly contradictory positions. But they give rise to one of the most difficult problems the American people have to solve.

Hence Nebraska Methodism, in common with all evangelical denominations, has recognized the fact that her duty in reference to the work of education was twofold:

First, to help the State in its efforts to furnish the best education it could, under the before mentioned restrictions, by supplying as many earnest Christian young men and women to be teachers in the public schools as possible.

Second, surrounding the State institutions with an environment of positive moral and religious influences, such as the State, under her restrictions, can not supply.

But, however much the Church may help the State in its educational work, the State can never build up a system or an institution that will impart a complete education, according to our standard, and must therefore be supplemented by denominational schools.

How much of the work of education can be safely entrusted to the State, and how much must be reserved for other agencies?

How far can the State go in the recognition of the Bible in the school, and where must it stop in the process of education?

In regard to these questions, the Methodists of Nebraska hold that, as this is neither a non-Christian nor

an infidel nation, but essentially a Christian nation, the State may, in a general, non-sectarian way, allow the Bible to be read in the schools. But it may not presume to exercise the function of propagating any form of religion, or interfere in any manner with the religious life.

While the question of just where the dividing line is to be drawn, beyond which the State may not go in the direction of developing and directing the religious nature, is not yet fully determined, two broad principles are recognized:

First, that the State must, as far as it can consistently with the second principle, supplement the home, and private and denominational enterprises in the work of education.

Second, that this same principle of the separation of State and Church makes it impossible for the State to furnish a complete education, according to the first principle, and it must in turn be supplemented by the Church with her denominational schools.

We are glad to say that the truth of history requires us to record that Nebraska Methodism has done creditable work along both lines.

I am informed by Professor W. R. Jackson, ex-State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Professor J. L. McBrien, present deputy, that a large percentage of the public school teachers are Christian, and a large percentage of these are Methodist.

Then in the second line of helpfulness we have rendered good service, as the history of the State University and the State Normal School will show, when fully written. As previously stated, the latter was at first intended to be a Methodist school, and Hiram Burch, one of our

most faithful Methodist preachers, and Professor McKenzie, gave over two years' hard service to its building up, and after failure to induce the Conference to take it, because of certain conditions deemed impracticable, consented to its being turned over to the State as a Normal.

In the chapter on the development of our Church in Lincoln, reference was made to the magnificent services rendered by St. Paul's Church, and especially by a band of "elect ladies," led by Mrs. Roberts, in counteracting the influence of certain infidel professors in the State University, and supplying the requisite moral and religious environment for the students. Along the same line the following extract from Hiram Burch's "Recollections," will show the immense influence Methodism has exerted in shaping and giving a moral and even religious tone to the State Normal, which was located at Peru instead of a Methodist college, as at first designed: "It may seem to the casual observer that the time spent, the labor bestowed, and the sacrifice made in founding that school was nearly or quite thrown away, at least so far as our Church is concerned. But not so. Our beloved brother, Professor J. M. McKenzie, a devout Christian and earnest Methodist, who had charge of the school during its formative period, and without whose labors and sacrifice it seems hardly possible that any degree of success could have been attained, was still at the head of the school after it was given to the State, and gave it that religious trend which it has largely maintained during its entire history. For instance, a Tuesday night students' prayer-meeting was established, which was never interfered with by other exercises, not even during commencement week. In fact, the farewell students' prayer-meet-

ing, at which students took a religious leave of each other, and of their teachers, was an interesting and inspiring feature of commencement week, and was kept up as long as I was personally acquainted with the school, and is still, so far as I know. And not only did they have their student's prayer-meeting, but no exercises were held at the Normal on the regular Church prayer-meeting evening.

It was from the position as principal of the State Normal that Professor McKenzie was called to be State Superintendent, which position he held for six years. Thus, indirectly, the founding of the school gave the State the services of that godly man and competent and successful educator, who, more perhaps than any other man, laid the foundations of our public-school system, and in so doing, emphasized the importance of the moral and spiritual in education. The seat of the State Normal school has been the scene of some very gracious revivals, mainly in connection with the Methodist Church of that place. Among the most successful of these, which have been of almost annual occurrence, may be mentioned one during the pastorate of Rev. L. F. Britt, when there were about one hundred converts; and of more recent date, under the labors of that successful lay evangelist, Dr. B. L. Paine, which occurred, I think, during the pastorate of Rev. G. M. Gates, at which nearly or quite three hundred were converted. These converts have been mostly students, and largely from Methodist families. Several of these have entered the work of the ministry in our own Church and in other Churches. Some have gone as missionaries to distant fields, some have become ministers' wives, and many more have gone forth as Christian

teachers, working in our public schools and institutions of learning."

J. M. McKenzie was the pioneer Methodist educator in Nebraska. We meet him first in the early sixties at Pawnee City, endeavoring to plant an educational institution in that place, called "Nemaha Valley Seminary and Normal Institute." But he was soon called to take charge of the institution at Peru, referred to by Brother Burch, while it was yet expected that it would be a Methodist school, and remained at the head after it became a State Normal. While here he was called to the State superintendency, the second man to serve in that capacity. Probably few men who have occupied that position, have had as much to do, or have actually done as much toward organizing the public-school system of Nebraska, as did J. M. McKenzie during the six years which he held that important office. His efficiency is evidenced to some extent by the fact that his was the rare distinction of serving three terms in succession.

During all these years in which he was serving the State, first in organizing its Normal school, and afterward the larger system of public schools, he was a devout Christian, with a rich religious experience, which gave tone and character to all his work on educational lines. He afterwards rendered years of splendid service to the Church at York College, and later went to California.

Another of the pioneer educators was J. J. Fleharty. He seemed to feel that his life work lay along educational lines. Coming to Nebraska in the later seventies and finding that nothing had been done officially along that line, it seemed to him that this situation furnished him

the opportunity to supply the long recognized need. Looking over the field he selected Osceola as the most suitable place and soon had that warm-hearted, stalwart layman, John H. Mickey, as one of his stanch supporters. He was doing faithful work in his line, but ere long he was doomed to disappointment, the Conference soon after choosing York as the seat of its Conference school. Though disappointed, he was not daunted, and as we have seen, tried again, selecting Fullerton, in the North Nebraska Conference. But here also he was again disappointed, Central City being chosen, and he was again to see his plans miscarry.

No purer man, or one more unselfishly devoted to what he deemed the call of God has ever wrought in the Lord's vineyard in Nebraska. This is none the less true because of these two defeats, and the consequent bitter disappointment that followed, which, together with the hard work involved, soon undermined his constitution. He was in the meanwhile, engaged in literary pursuits, publishing two books, the "Life of Rev. Asahel E. Phelps" and "Social Impurity."

In 1861 he was married to Miss Anna Brace, and in all his subsequent labors she was a true "helpmeet."

This noble, toilful, sanctified life closed May 2, 1884, at Tampa, Florida, whither they had gone in a vain hope of prolonging his life.

CHAPTER XXVI.

FOURTH PERIOD. (1880-1904.)

SOME SUBORDINATE AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS.

It could not be otherwise than that the religion established by our Lord, who Himself was constantly ministering to the whole man, feeding the hungry, healing the sick, instructing the mind, and pardoning the guilty, and regenerating the soul, should take on all the manifold forms required by human nature, and continue to minister to the whole man. Then the generous impulses that are generated in the hearts of his disciples, eliminating selfishness, impelling by their gentle pressure, guided by an intelligent perception of the need, must soon find expression in suitable agencies and institutions for carrying on these larger features of Christian work, and found a hospital for the sick.

It is among the pleasant recollections of the writer that, when pastor of the First Church, South Omaha, in 1890, at one of our preachers' meetings, Dr. D. A. Foote, of Omaha, came before us and presented the matter for the first time, and the truth of history requires the statement that the inception of the movement is due to Dr. Foote. A committee was appointed and the agitation began and through varying stages of careful, prayerful consideration, culminated in a tangible form the following year.

OLD METHODIST HOSPITAL AT OMAHA.

33 THE NEW METHODIST HOSPITAL AT OMAHA.

That the matter should be approached cautiously, step by step, with no little hesitancy, and even some honest opposition, was to be expected, for Omaha Methodism was yet under the burden of debt, and ill prepared to assume further financial responsibility.

The progress of this movement toward its blessed consummation is so well told by Brother Haynes,* that I again quote him: "The making of a beginning was held in reserve for the time being till the matter might be further investigated. The most inquisitive were on the alert seeking the while information. An opportunity came unsought. Mrs. Lucy Rider Meyer, of Chicago, who is reputed as the founder of training schools for nurses in the Methodist Church, accompanied by her husband, on their way to Denver, visited Omaha, and presented to a meeting held in the basement of the First Methodist Church, some of the features of the work necessary to the organization of a hospital. This beginning was the occasion of an effort to commence work looking to the establishment of a hospital and Deaconess Home in this city. The intelligent and satisfactory presentation of the case by these zealous advocates gave inspiration to not a few, and particularly the women present were aroused so thoroughly as to incite them to greater deeds.

The women—Mrs. Haynes, Mrs. Claflin, Mrs. Austin, and Mrs. Bryant—pressed the matter with such earnestness and solicitude that the pastors changed their purpose as much as to agree that if $1,500 should be raised as a guarantee of success, they would make no further opposition. Dr. J. W. Shenk courageously sec-

* History of Omaha Methodism.

MRS. ALLIE P. MCLAUGHLIN, SUPERINTENDENT, AND TWENTY-FIVE OTHER DEACONESSES OF THE OMAHA HOSPITAL AND DEACONESS HOME.

onded the presiding elder and the women in an endeavor to make a trial.

In the meantime Dr. Gifford, who was the owner of an infirmary on South Twentieth, near Harney Street, learning of the effort being made, offered the building which he had erected at his own expense, on the condition of an indebtedness of $1,900 being assumed and that there be six rooms reserved for his patients—two for men and two for women, and two besides, subject, however, to the rules of the hospital. The Hospital Association accepted the proposition, and leasing the ground at $400 a year, opened the institution on May 28, 1891, for the reception of patients.

On the same day and at the same place, the association met and effected a permanent organization by electing Dr. J. W. Shenk president, and J. C. Cowgill secretary. A constitution was adopted, and a committee appointed to secure the legal incorporation of the association. The name given the institution is the Methodist Hospital and Deaconess Home of Omaha. On May 24th, the hospital and home were dedicated by Bishop John P. Newman.

"The opening of the hospital," says the Omaha *Christian Advocate,* "is an event of great interest. The association now owns property worth $10,000, on which there is an indebtedness of $1,900. There has been about $1,500 subscribed for current expenses. The building has capacity for twenty-eight beds."

From the date of the opening till the present a continuous good work has been done in caring for the sick, maimed, and otherwise disabled ones. But the work of caring for such as are admitted to the hospital can not

be done without expense; and provision had to be made to meet the constantly accumulating outlay. To meet this in part, it was deemed wise to make an inducement for friends and citizens to contribute a small sum by offering an equivalent. Hence, any one in health who may pay into the treasury ten dollars at one time is entitled to a yearly membership ticket, which allows the contributor, in case of personal sickness, to be taken care of without charge, during the year of making the payment."

The growth and history of this blessed work are thus briefly, but eloquently, summarized by Mrs. Allie P. McLaughlin, who has been superintendent from the first: "The Hospital and Deaconess Home Association was organized thirteen years ago this March. We opened the hospital the 28th day of May, 1891. We began to receive our patients without any means on hand, but the Lord has so prospered us, we have taken care of more than nine thousand people, of whom one-third have been entirely free. And to-day we have no debt. Our little deaconess family of workers numbered three at first, but now numbers forty-seven. We have been very much cramped all of these years because of our limited quarters. Thousands have been turned from our doors because we could not receive them for lack of room.

The spiritual part of this work is one of the leading features, all of the workers being Christian people. The hospital itself is a great mission field. There have been a great many conversions as the months and years have gone by.

The new building is now begun, the site paid for and about half enough for a $110,000 building. Of the first

workers who came thirteen years ago, two of us yet remain, Miss Jennie Cavanaugh and myself."

While under Methodist auspices, its beneficence is not confined to Methodist people, as will be seen by the following figures of a year's work, as appears from the annual report for 1901-02: No Church, 235; Methodist, 231; all other denominations, including sixty-three Catholics, 420.

Besides the nursing in the hospital, involved in the care of these patients, these nurses spent 26,872 hours in nursing patients outside of the hospital.

On the lines of spiritual work they have visiting deaconesses, and many of our pastors will bear cheerful witness to their helpfulness in revival-meetings, and other forms of work.

Their staff of physicians and surgeons include some of the most skillful in the country. Their names are: Harold Gifford, A. F. Jonas, J. C. Moore, W. O. Bridges, W. S. Gibbs, H. M. McClanahan, J. M. Aikin, R. S. Anglin, O. S. Hoffman, W. K. Yeakel, D. A. Foote, S. J. Quimby, and Mrs. Freeda M. Lankton.

MOTHERS' JEWELS HOME.

Not only was the Church broadening the range of her activities and agencies so as to include the hospitals, but the same generous impulse led her to take steps to provide for homeless children. In this she shared a general movement in this direction which set in about this time which was not only the result of a charitable impulse, but the intelligent perception of an urgent need that such children should be cared for and nurtured under favorable influences, lest they grow up without any training, or what is worse, vicious training.

THE MOTHERS' JEWELS HOME.

Moved by this impulse, Dr. W. L. Armstrong, M. D., had already dedicated his one hundred and sixty acre farm in Platte County, Nebraska, to that purpose, and had been caring for a few children as best he could. But the movement did not become very efficient, or command the support necessary to success. But Dr. Armstrong had his heart set on this noble project, and the Heavenly Father soon opened the way to much larger things. Coincident with this intense desire on the part of Dr. Armstrong to do something along this line, there was a growing conviction among the leaders of the Woman's Home Missionary Society that they ought to enter this field, and were already casting about for a suitable place to establish a national orphanage. Just at this juncture Mrs. Spurlock, who had been elected a delegate to the meeting of the National Board of Managers, who were to act on this matter at their next meeting, proposed to Dr. Armstrong that he join forces with the Woman's Home Missionary Society and that they work together for the object that had come to be so dear to both. To this he readily consented, and with this leverage, Mrs. Spurlock's earnest and eloquent plea won the day, and it was decided by the Board of Managers to locate their institution in Nebraska, and soon after that York was selected as the site. Dr. Armstrong giving his $3,000 farm and the York people adding $7,000, a fine farm of 160 acres adjacent to the city of York, worth then $10,000, was purchased and the Mothers' Jewels Home began its beneficent career.

As seemed most fitting, good Dr. Armstrong was placed in charge, but he was already growing old and enfeebled by ill-health, and soon found the work too hard,

and retired. His heart was saddened by the fact that by reason of unlooked-for financial embarrassment his, as he supposed, munificent gift, proved rather a financial burden to the society. To help him in his time of extreme need they paid him $900 besides paying off a mortgage on his farm. But his intentions were good and Dr. Armstrong is none the less noble and is to be none the less honored because of these troubles.

It was thus this beneficent institution came into be-

Mr. Burwell Spurlock.

Mrs. Isabella Spurlock.

ing, for which the Woman's Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Church becomes sponsor. While national in this regard, and in the scope of its operations, yet being located in the center of Nebraska's population, its beneficent results must accrue more largely to Nebraska than to any other State, and specially concerns Nebraska Methodism. Besides, the two to whose care it was intrusted, after Dr. Armstrong was compelled to retire, have been identified with Nebraska Methodism from its very beginning. Burwell Spurlock came to Ne-

braska in 1855, settling in Plattsmouth, and, as we have seen, was among the members of the first class organized there. He was one of the first Methodists the writer got acquainted with when he landed in Nebraska in 1865, and he has known him well ever since. He found him busy in Church work, and has never known him to be otherwise. His pure life, good business qualifications, and kind-hearted instincts, make him an ideal superintendent. Mrs. Spurlock came to Nebraska still earlier than Burwell, coming with her parents in 1854. She was among those who formed the class organized in the Morris settlement, which we have seen was the first ever formed in Nebraska. She, too, has the qualities of refinement, culture, and motherly instincts that fit her for the place of assistant superintendent. We may be sure that the institution over which these two preside will be speedily transformed into a real home to the little folks under their care, and it is not surprising that the waifs soon trustfully and affectionately call them "Uncle Burwell" and "Auntie Spurlock."

Mrs. Spurlock, before entering upon her present work was identified with the Woman's Christian Temperance Union work in the early seventies, and in 1875 was secretary of the convention that effected the State organization of that society. She was the first delegate elected to the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union Convention at the time when Miss Willard was the unchallenged leader of that organization, and was destined to become recognized as the chief of womankind throughout the world. The following letter in answer to one written by Mrs. Spurlock, shows the high regard in which Sister Spurlock was held by this queenly woman:

"Dearest Friend,—Your letter is the nicest one we have yet, and carries me back to the early days of the dear 'Old National,' when you and I worked together. I can not tell you how I have regretted that we have not done so from that day to this, and yet it was perhaps largely a regret of sentiment because of the congeniality I felt in you, for so far as accomplishing a blessed work in the world, you have certainly done so. Please thank your good husband for me that he chose the *Signal*, and may you both be blessed in your own precious work as you have helped ours by generous gift and glowing words. Believe me, always your sister in heart,

"Frances E. Willard."

While the Mothers' Jewels Home is thus closely identified with Nebraska Methodism, it is yet national and cosmopolitan in the range of its beneficence, admitting homeless children of all races and nationalities. Some have come from many of the States, and two from far-off Alaska, while there have been two from India, and two Arabian children.

The work is carried along two lines: The finding of Christian homes for as many as possible, and the making of a home for such as can not be provided for in that way.

Those seeking children are particular that they come of good stock, are strong and healthy, and the girls must be handsome. Brother and Sister Spurlock are also very particular about the homes they put their "children" in. It is not every Christian home even that will do, so there are always quite a number to be cared for and these are the ones less robust in health and less promising mentally and morally.

There is a regular school imparting instruction from the first to sixth grade, besides lessons in sewing, housework, farming, and other employments.

But we may be sure that the moral and spiritual interests of these children are duly cared for. Family prayers, services each Sabbath afternoon, and attendance at the Church service in town, but chiefly through the influence of these pious, tactful superintendents, are some of the ways by which the supreme culture is imparted.

Besides the general officers of the society, with Mrs. General Clinton B. Fisk at the head, the oversight of this "Home" is committed to an Advisory Board of ten elect ladies, including the following well-known names of those who represent the Nebraska Conference: Mrs. M. E. Roberts, Mrs. John A. Van Anda, and Mrs. Erastus Smith.

Perhaps the following letters, the first from a foster mother who has adopted one of these waifs, and the second an extract from one written by one of these waifs that has been adopted, will show even more clearly what is being done than I can in any words of mine:

"Dear Mrs. Spurlock,—Your letter received some time ago, and really, should have been answered sooner, for I know if you get time from so many other little ones to think of Helene you must feel uneasy at our long silence. I do not think she has seen a homesick day since she came, and she is altogether lovable and lovely. She goes to school every day and is perfectly happy. She says, 'Tell Auntie Spurlock that we love each other ten times better than we did at first.' What more can I say about her only that we all love her and she does us. And,

now, dear Mrs. Spurlock, I will close with best wishes for you and yours, I am yours sincerely,

"MRS. W. E. HADLEY."

From a little girl twelve years old:

"Dear Auntie Spurlock,—I have been thinking I would write to you for a long time. I have been here over a year. I like my home very, very, very much, they are all so good to me. I go to school and read in the fifth reader. I like my teacher very much, you saw her when you were here. Aunt Julia thinks everything of the little girl you gave her, Ruby Viola. Ruby comes and sees me and then I go and see her. I have such a pretty hat for summer, it is white leghorn, and is trimmed with pink roses and pink ribbon. Aunt Julia got Ruby a white leghorn hat, too. Hers is trimmed with blue ribbon and blue flowers."

Many loving hearts and willing hands have wrought in this blessed work. Among these it is fitting that a daughter of the late Dr. W. B. Slaughter, who has been mentioned frequently in these pages, Mrs. Hattie Hawver, is now rendering valuable assistance in collecting funds for a new building.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES.

Up to 1880, little had been done for our young people aside from the Sunday-school and the Chautauqua Circles. The idea of the latter had some years before the beginning of this period been born in the heart and the brain of that Sunday-school genius, John H. Vincent, and in many of the Churches of our own and other denominations, Chautauqua Circles had been formed, and

Chautauqua Assemblies had sprung up everywhere. While the religious element was present in this movement, its predominant feature seemed to be more intellectual, and though of great value was deemed inadequate to accomplish all that was needed to be done for the young people of the Church. The recognition and feeling of this need seemed to rise spontaneously in all the Churches, but Rev. F. E. Clark, of the Congregational Church was the first to give practical form to the wish by starting the Christian Endeavor organization. It was intended at first that this should be a great interdenominational affair, and there should be but one great Young People's Society. This idea seemed to take well for awhile, but it soon became apparent that it did not work well for our young people, and in the early eighties, a number of Young People's organizations sprung up in our Church. This did not work well, either, and the clashing of conflicting claims soon gave rise to a strong desire among the leaders to combine all in one, and this was effected in May, 1887, at what is now called Epworth Church, Cleveland, Ohio.

After this the development in Nebraska, as elsewhere, was very rapid, and there is now scarcely a Methodist Church in Nebraska without its Epworth League, with its inspiring motto, "Look up, Lift up." Many of these are vigorous, and tend greatly to promote intelligent piety among our young people.

While in 1880 there was not a single distinctive religious Young People's organization, outside of its Sunday-school, there are now in the State about sixteen thousand members of the Epworth League. We have to say "about" for the West and Northwest Nebraska Conferences do not report their Leagues. There is not to

exceed one in ten of the circuits and stations where there is not a League organized. These Leagues, besides holding their local devotional, social, and business meetings, have held enthusiastic district, Conference, and State conventions, at which topics relating to their work have been discussed, and plans of work made.

Without doubt the most striking evidence of the zeal and ability to bring things to pass of Nebraska's younger Methodism is found in the Nebraska Epworth Assembly.

L. O. Jones.

Founded by the Nebraska Conference Epworth League upon recommendation of President L. O. Jones, in 1896 the first session was held at Lincoln Park, in August, 1897, and was admitted by all to be a phenomenal success. Seven annual sessions have been held, each being greater in attendance and interest than its predecessor. The Assembly Camp has been a marvel to all who have seen it. Three thousand people, in round numbers, have each year spent the Assembly period in tents upon the grounds.

Many widely noted and world famous men and women have been heard from time to time from the Assembly platform, including such well-known names as Bishops Bowman, McCabe, Ninde, Thoburn, Hamilton, Cranston, Joyce, and Galloway; General Secretaries Schell and Berry; Reverends Sam Jones, Frank Gunsaulus, Abram Palmer, Thirkield, McDowell, Eaton, Parkhurst, Nicholson, Driver, McIntyre; Generals O. O. Howard and Fitzhugh Lee; Colonel Bain, and Mrs. Ballington Booth, and many others.

This was the first of the summer Assemblies to adopt and maintain a distinct and pronounced evangelistic feature in the annual program.

The annual gross income of the Assembly has been about $10,000. In addition to paying all expenses, about $800 has been donated to worn-out preachers, and $1,000 to the Nebraska Wesleyan, to aid in paying off the debt of that institution. With the further accumulation of funds purchase was made of a beautiful tract of nearly forty acres adjoining Lincoln on the southwest, which was named Epworth Lake Park. Extensive improvements, including the building of the largest park auditorium in the State, were made, and in which the sessions of the 1903 Assembly were held.

The present officers are L. O. Jones, president; C. E. Sanderson, vice-president; Elmer E. Lesh, secretary; Rev. C. M. Shepherd, D. D., auditor; R. W. Kelly, treasurer.

OMAHA CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE.

Omaha, being 500 miles west of Chicago, where the *Northwestern Christian Advocate* was published, and over 400 miles from St. Louis, where the *Central* was then

published, was for many years regarded as the strategical point where a branch of the Book Concern would be located, and another member of the *Advocate* family established. The writer attended a meeting in Council Bluffs in 1871, which had that object in view. Nothing tangible came of it until the *Omaha Advocate* entered the field.

The origin of this enterprise dates back, according to Rev. W. G. Vessels, formerly of the West Nebraska Conference, to a paper called *The Vanguard**, which he published, and which was changed to the *Nebraska Christian Advocate,* and after fifteen months was sold to Rev. Geo. S. Davis and became the *Nebraska Methodist,* which was published for one year at Hastings, Dr. George S. Davis being editor, and Dr. L. F. Britt being associate editor.

It was then removed to University Place, where Davis continued to edit and publish it for two years. In 1890, Dr. J. W. Shenk bought an interest in it and the plant was removed to Omaha, the first issue of the paper from Omaha bearing date of August 9, 1890. On the first of the following January, Geo. S. Davis sold his interest to Dr. Shenk and was soon after appointed to the difficult and responsible position of superintendent of missions in Bulgaria.

Dr. Shenk now became sole editor and soon after sole owner of the paper. In 1892 the General Conference made the paper an official organ of that body and appointed a publishing commission consisting of Bishop J. P. Newman, Dr. J. B. Maxfield, Dr. C. F. Creighton, Dr. J. W. Shenk, John Dale, Dr. B. L. Paine, and C. F. Weller. This body operated under the name of the Methodist

* Dr. Davis thinks a paper published by Geo. S. Alexander is entitled to be considered the first.

Publishing Company, but the commission refusing to become financially responsible for any obligations, the financial burden fell upon the chief owner of the stock, Dr. J. W. Shenk, who was thus made the real publisher as well as editor, to which position he had been elected by the Commission. In 1896 the General Conference accepted the paper as a donation to the Church, and appropriated a subsidy of $3,000 a year to aid in its publication. Under the impetus thus given, the subscription list, which in 1890 consisted of 800 subscribers, when it came to Omaha and had increased to 4,000 in 1896, went up to 6,500, the largest subscription list of any subsidized paper in the Church. Under the arrangement Curts and Jennings were the nominal publishers, but the editor, Rev. Dr. J. W. Shenk, who had been elected by the Book Committee, was made solely responsible for the financial as well as the editorial management.

In the fall of 1899 a movement toward consolidation of our *Advocates* was inaugurated by the Kansas Conference, and a memorial was sent up to the General Conference to that end. It resulted in the consolidation of the *Omaha Christian Advocate,* the *Rocky Mountain Christian Advocate,* and the *Central Christian Advocate,* and the place of publication was removed to Kansas City, Missouri, together with the removal of the Methodist Book Depository from St. Louis to that city. By this means a large list of subscribers was transferred from the *Omaha Christian Advocate* to the *Central Christian Advocate.* At the time of the consolidation the subscription list of the *Omaha Christian Advocate* was increasing rapidly.

EVANGELISTS.

The fourth period has witnessed a marked development of the evangelistic form of Church work, and brought into the field a large number of professional evangelists, or men and women who have felt themselves called to that work. This has been attributed by some to the want of spirituality in the pastorate, and lack of old-time spiritual power in the Church generally. But this is an erroneous view and does injustice to a noble class of men who are burdened with the care of increasingly large Churches, with a complex machinery that calls for the same degree of devotion and sometimes more of care than the fathers knew. Their very success in building up strong Churches has brought about these changed conditions to which Methodism is adjusting herself. This readiness to adopt new methods in the accomplishment of her soul-saving, soul-nurturing mission, has been characteristic of our Church from the first, and one of the sources of her power. To her it is not means and methods that are sacred and fundamental, but the end, which is the salvation of men and building them up into strong, clean characters. She is ready to discard the old methods whenever new ones seem better adapted to that great purpose.

In common with other Churches everywhere, Nebraska Methodism has in the last twenty-five years introduced into the local Church much additional machinery, which with what we already had, makes the Church a much more complex organism than our fathers served. It would be difficult to mention any feature of that machinery that we would care to leave out. Certainly not the Sunday-school nor Epworth League or Ladies' Aid

or the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, or Woman's Home Missionary Society. But these impose a new and difficult task on the modern pastor, and call for equipments other than those which give a man success as a revivalist. He must also have executive ability and these two are not always found in the same man. While no Methodist preacher has a right to be satisfied with himself if he has not the old-time passion for lost souls; or with his work, unless blessed with some seals to his ministry, still he may not have the natural qualification for revival work that the Church needs. What then? As in the industrial world the more complex conditions have made the principle of the division of labor necessary, may not the more complex organization of the Church operate the same way, and the pastor with these other cares and responsibilities, call to his aid some man of God who has been specially equipped for this work? Thus it seems to the writer.

But, however we may account for it or justify it, there has been a great growth of this idea and method, and there has spontaneously arisen a great army of evangelists. While many of these have been God-called and very useful, others have been self-constituted, fanatical, or worse, and very harmful. In view of these things, our Church has wisely recognized the evangelist class of workers and provided a place in our system for the same. Any Conference may request the appointment of one or more of its members to this special work, and under certain restrictions, the local Churches may employ these and others to assist their pastor.

Some of these evangelists whom God has honored with His presence and power, and whose labors have been

a blessing to the Church, should be mentioned. We have seen how good Robert Laing has given over forty years to that work in Nebraska, and thousands of souls have been saved.

N. L. Hoopengarner, of the Nebraska Conference, entered the field as an evangelist in the later eighties and was eminently successful. He conducted a union revival at Neligh during Dr. Wm. Gorst's pastorate, resulting in some sixty accessions to the Methodist Church and many to others. The same year he had charge of the evangelistic services of the Neligh District Camp-meeting, at which about one hundred were converted.

H. L. Powers, D. D., entered the North Nebraska Conference in the early eighties, being transferred from the Missouri Conference. After filling a number of important pastorates, among them Tekamah, Columbus, and Trinity, Grand Island, he felt called to the evangelistic field, in which he has been very successful. His earnest, not to say vehement, style of oratory, emphasizing the depth of his conviction that what he says is truth of tremendous import, seems well suited to his chosen work. His Bible readings are also very helpful. Brother Powers is now Conference evangelist and resides in Lincoln.

D. W. McGregor is another one of our safe, successful evangelists, who, up to last year, had been appointed as North Nebraska Conference evangelist, and has been the means of bringing many into the kingdom. He reentered the pastoral work at the last Conference.

Miss Mae Phillips has been one of our most successful evangelists, and on the Neligh District and in many other places, many think of her as the chosen instrument by which they have been led to the better life.

Others have entered the field later whose labors have been blessed of the Lord. Dr. B. L. Paine, of Lincoln, has been very successful. F. A. Campbell, W. H. Prescott, and L. F. Smith are now under appointment as Conference evangelists for the Nebraska Conference, and are vigorously pushing the battle along that line.

MORAL REFORMS.

In all moral reforms, Methodism has been at the forefront. This is specially true of the temperance reform that has been most prominent during the half century. At the first Conference in 1861 the report on temperance has these ringing words in the following resolution:

"Resolved, First, That if it was ever necessary to oppose an unbroken front to this evil, now is the time. Second, that a prohibition law would give force and vigor, edge and point to moral suasion. Third, that at each of our appointments during the coming Conference year, we will preach at least once on this subject."

Though substantially the same attitude has been reaffirmed at every Conference since, no subsequent expression on this subject has shown a more advanced position regarding the two main phases of the reform, being total abstinence for the individual and absolute prohibition of the traffic. Here is one point where Nebraska Methodism will not be able to grow, but will have many opportunities to show her colors in more tangible ways than by resolutions. It may be safely affirmed that whenever the lines have been clearly drawn, as they were in 1890, during the amendment campaign, Methodism has borne the brunt of the battle. No Church put in a larger percentage of votes for the amendment. Indeed it may be said it was unani-

mous. And at the present time, what seems to be one of the most aggressive forms of the temperance reform, the Anti-Saloon League, very fittingly has at the head of it an able, aggressive Methodist preacher, in the person of Rev. J. B. Carns, D. D.

WOMEN IN THE GENERAL CONFERENCE.

It is greatly to the credit of the entire Methodism of Nebraska in general, and to the leaders of St. Paul's Church in Lincoln in particular, that in that Church, in the spring of 1887, the agitation which in twelve years issued in the admission of women into the General Conference, had its origin. The two women whose fertile brains first conceived the thought, and broached the subject to the other ladies of the Church on the occasion of the dedication of the dining-room of the Church, were Miss Phebe Elliott and Mrs. Franc R. Elliott. Both these elect ladies, as might be readily supposed, were of superior intelligence and force of character. The former is the daughter of that famous educator and champion of co-education, Rev. Charles Elliott, D. D., president of Wesleyan University at Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, and editor of the *Western Christian Advocate*. In answer to a question as to how the thought took shape in her mind, she says that it must have risen spontaneously and naturally out of those lessons of her girlhood, that came from her father's teaching of the absolute equality of the sexes in all that relates to mind, morals, and religion, and the rights growing out of this. Miss Phebe made her home with her sister-in-law, and the subject was a matter of frequent discussion, Mr. Elliott being in hearty sympathy with the ladies.

About this time Bishop Bowman visited Lincoln, and when asked as to the eligibility of women for membership in the General Conference, seemed to be of the opinion, that being eligible to a seat in Quarterly Conferences and Lay Electoral Conferences, nothing could keep them out of the General Conference, if they could get the votes to elect them. This seemed so rational, that they were encouraged to go forward, and broach the matter to the ladies of the Church on the occasion of the dedication referred to. "That was an earnest meeting composed of responsive, intelligent women—a more choice coterie it would be hard to find in any community than were these women of St. Paul's in the prosperous town of Lincoln in the eighties."

These two elect ladies who gave the initiative to the movement were at once joined by such women as Mrs. M. E. Roberts, Mrs. Angie F. Newman, and others, and the result of their agitation was the election at the next session of the Nebraska Conference of Mrs. Angie F. Newman, the first woman ever elected to the General Conference.

But by extensive correspondence, these women extended their propaganda to other Conferences, and the result was the election by the great Rock River Conference of that greatest woman of her age, Frances E. Willard, as one of the lay delegates; then Mrs. Mary C. Nind, from the Minnesota Conference, and five others from different sections.

We know the result. When the Methodist Church saw eight such women, some of them the peers of any lay delegate on the floor of the General Conference, and one at least the peer of any bishop, representing two-thirds

of the membership of the Church, knocking at the door of the General Conference, it was never possible afterward to convince that Church that there was any sufficient reason for shutting them out, and it was impossible to stop the movement till the womanhood of the Church were conceded their rights and triumphantly seated in the General Conference.

Mrs. M. E. Roberts, one of those who took part in the original movement, and who at the Lay Electoral Conference in 1887, nominated Mrs. Newman for the place, was herself elected at the last Nebraska Conference. There is not only a sort of poetic justice in this, but it is an honor well won and worthily bestowed.

CHAPTER XXVII.

FOURTH PERIOD. (1880-1904.)

DURING this last period all but two, Burch and Adriance, who bore a conspicuous part in the fifties and sixties, have gone to their reward.

In 1883, A. G. White, the indomitable leader whom no calamity could daunt, passed away in the prime of life.

In 1884 the pushing, energetic Van Doozer was summoned with startling suddenness, but was found ready, for he had "fought a good fight and finished his course."

In 1890, T. B. Lemon, "like a shock of corn ripe for the garner," is gathered home.

Of these three suitable mention has already been made. It will now be fitting, as we stand at the graves of these two fallen leaders, Maxfield and Davis, to note more fully some phases of their later work, and of the great qualities that made them leaders, as observed by their comrades on the field of battle. Dr. Maxfield was the first of these two to hear the summons.

During the last period the Church has found much important work for this strong man. We find him, at the beginning of the period, in 1880, in charge of one of the two most important charges in the State, First Church, Omaha. He is again called to district work in 1881, becoming presiding elder of the Omaha District. Then when the North Nebraska Conference established her institution of learning at Central City, none seemed so well qualified to superintend the organization of this

school, and through his influence and ability rally the forces to its support, as J. B. Maxfield, and accordingly he was elected president.

But the task involved much excessively hard work, and there was in the nature of such an undertaking much of care, and not a little that would worry and annoy even this usually self-poised man, and many of us who watched him during the three years of incumbency, are not surprised that even his seemingly robust frame could not stand the strain, and required him to relinquish the work. But this did not occur till his constitution was shattered. Though he will yet put in twelve years of effective work, serving full terms on the Norfolk and Omaha Districts, the beginning of the end may be traced to his work at Central City.

John B. Maxfield was spared, and his usefulness continued till he saw the band who constituted the first Nebraska Conference, which he joined on trial in 1861, increase through the years, till there are four Conferences, any one of which is larger than the Conference he joined, and the Church well organized in all parts of the State. It must have been a source of very great satisfaction to him to have contemplated these grand results, and be conscious that he had borne no small share in bringing all this to pass. He closes his life with a sense of well-rounded completeness, his work all done, when at last the summons came, as it did on the 11th of September, 1900. Mrs. Maxfield, who had ministered to his comfort during his long and painful illness, was at his bedside at Boulder, Colorado, seeking by all possible means to prolong that precious life, writes me that a "beautiful smile came over his face as he died."

I have already had much to say about Dr. Maxfield in the course of this history, but will add what his brethren of the North Nebraska Conference have to say of their fallen leader. At the memorial service Dr. Hodgetts speaks of his preaching, saying: "I remember well the first time I heard him preach, when I was fresh from the East, where I had lived among the great preachers of the Church. I can say honestly and frankly I thought I never heard the equal of that man as a preacher of Jesus Christ. Some of my friends who came out shortly afterward and heard him, said about the same. Wherever I went I heard the same story. Everybody conceded he was a prince among preachers."

And his brethren officially place on record the following estimate of his worth:

"His great intellectual power, which enabled him to see clearly, grasp easily and strongly the fundamental truths of the Gospel, his marvelous command of language which enabled him to give most clear and forceful expression to his thoughts, and his warm and sympathetic nature constituted John B. Maxfield a great pulpit orator, ranking among the best in the entire Church.

"His quick perception of what ought to be done in emergencies, his sound judgment in affairs of public interest in Church and State, with his decision of character made him always a leader among men.

"His genial qualities of heart and his commanding power of intellect made him seem equally at home in the humblest Quarterly Conference on a frontier charge, or on the floor of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. No one has done more, and few have done as much for Methodism in Nebraska as Dr. J. B.

Maxfield. His Christian character was absolutely free from all cant or mere perfunctoriness, but was always genuine and hearty. He stood out boldly for righteousness under all circumstances, and was never known to fear any man."

Instead of being present at the last session of his Conference and answering to roll call as he had done at every session since it was organized in 1861, H. T. Davis was, during the session, on September 18, 1903, transferred from the Church militant to the Church triumphant, and will henceforth answer to the roll call of the redeemed. It is his distinguished privilege to have given more years of effective service to the cause of Christ in Nebraska than any other Methodist preacher, remaining in the effective ranks without a break, from June, 1858, to September, 1901, when he asked and received a superannuated relation. But he continued to do evangelistic work, aiding some of the pastors in revival-meetings during the following year, and thus it may be said, he gave forty-four years to active work in Nebraska, out of a total of forty-five during which he resided in the State.

And such years, every one crowded with some form of service that made the world richer, and was a benediction to thousands.

Of the great triumvirate, Davis, Lemon, Maxfield, naming them in the order in which they entered this field, he is the first to have entered the service in Nebraska, and was the last to be mustered out.

Much of the biography of each of these great leaders has appeared in preceding pages of this narrative. It could not be otherwise. I have not been able and have not tried to keep the history of the Church and the lives

of these men separate. The web and woof of this history has been largely what these men, and hundreds of others of like spirit, were, and what they did, the great Head of the Church employing them as His agents in the work.

The following memoir and words spoken by friends at the memorial service, held September 21, 1903, must close this imperfect earthly record of this man of God. The only perfect record of the lives of such men is the one kept by the recording angel, and may be read in the great hereafter:

"Henry T. Davis was born July 19, 1833, in Springfield, Ohio. He was 'born again,' 'from above,' March 4, 1853, in South Bend, Indiana, and almost immediately after his conversion came the call to preach. He was licensed as an exhorter when received into full fellowship in the Church, and June 23, 1855, received his license to preach from the Greencastle (Indiana) Quarterly Conference, being then a student at Asbury University. The following October he was received as a probationer into the Northwest Indiana Conference and appointed junior preacher upon Russellville Circuit. On September 17, 1857, Emily McCulloch, of Virgo County, Indiana, became his wife, and after forty-six years of beautiful and loving union, she and their three daughters sit together in hope lighted shadows.

"October 4, 1857, Bishop Waugh ordained Brother Davis a deacon. In 1858 he transferred to the Kansas-Nebraska Conference, and received as his first work in Nebraska, appointment to Bellevue. In the division of the Kansas and Nebraska Conference he identified himself with the Nebraska Conference, at the organization of which, April 4, 1861, he became a charter member. His

subsequent ministerial activities have been within the bounds of this Conference. The confidence reposed in him by his superiors in authority is indicated by his having served seven terms as presiding elder, and the esteem of his brethren in the Conference by their choice of him to represent them in the General Conference four times. He was also honored by the Nebraska Wesleyan University with the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity. During the session of Conference, which met at Lincoln, his home city, September 18, 1903, he came triumphantly to the end of his earthly sojourn, and his brethren in the ministry laid the precious deserted dust to rest in Wyuka Cemetery, September 21, 1903.

"Brother Davis excelled as a preacher. Much and faithful study of the 'Word' and of such other literature as was really helpful sidelights for its interpretation, illustrative for its application, furnished him always with the subject matter for sermons. And his own deep and fervid religious experience always afforded the fire to make those sermons effective with men. A multitude are they—God's seal to his ministry.

"He was also especially acceptable as a pastor. Naturally cheerful, genial, loving of disposition, and, with the Master Spirit of Ministries upon him, he was always a welcome comer. And his wise counsels, his tender sympathies, his fervent prayers left a sense of benediction when he had gone. He was beloved by well-nigh every one, and his memory will be precious."

Fletcher L. Wharton spoke tenderly: "The impression left upon me in the first short interview I had with Dr. Davis, was deep, and it grew deeper. I had a profound conviction that I had met a Christian gentleman.

He was a gentleman, therefore a good man. He was a Christian man, therefore a strong man. Somehow he put me upon my honor, in the confidence he put in me as a presiding elder, to be a true, faithful man in the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In the last days his countenance pale and wan, seemed to radiate the great peace of God. He made it easier for the people of this State to be good, to believe in God the Father, and to pray. Everywhere, on the prairie, in the dugout, he had the same message, 'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him might not perish, but have everlasting life.' The King has gone to his coronation. He stands on the hills in the sunlight eternal." Dr. Wharton closed his address with a fine expression concerning Mrs. Davis and her family.

Hiram Burch, who for so many years stood with Dr. Davis at the head of the Conference roll, spoke next. "I pay my tribute with mingled sorrow and joy. The personal loss of a friend and brother, the greater loss of the Church and society, causes sorrow. There is joy in the recollection of the past, of good actions, of Christian life and labors. Remember that the influence of that life and labors does not cease at the grave—but will go on in ever widening circles as the years go on. I am glad of that. Brother Davis was a great preacher, because he preached the Gospel. There was a Christian character and a blameless life, and love, behind his sermons. He excelled as a pastor. His cheery, genial sunshiny disposition made him a welcome visitor in the homes of the people. He was not only an acceptable visitor but a useful visitor. He is gone from us, but his memory remains with us and we shall cherish it as a treasure. We shall miss him in

the counsels of the Church, in the Conferences, but his record is on high. Knowing his life for more than forty-four years, we are not surprised over his triumphant death."

There are only two who came into work in the fifties who are still living; Hiram Burch and Jacob Adriance. Of the latter I have already spoken quite fully. Of the former, though I have had frequent occasion to mention his work, justice requires a few brief sentences in addition to what has already been said.

Hiram Burch has the distinction of having been connected with Nebraska Methodism since 1855, a longer period than any other Methodist preacher, either among the living or dead. While Brother Burch has not always been technically in the effective lists, being compelled to superannuate occasionally, and sustaining that relation now, there has been no time that he has not been active. Even while he was a superannuate he served charges as a supply and preached nearly every Sunday. He preaches occasionally even yet, and is a constant attendant on the means of grace.

Another fact that distinguishes him is that he built the first church ever erected in Nebraska, in 1856, at Nebraska City, and during those trying periods in the fifties and sixties, it was Burch that built more churches and parsonages than any one else.

Hiram Burch was born in Canada, December 11, 1829, and converted when eleven years old, and at twenty-one experienced heart purity, and entered the ministry in 1853, in Iowa, where he had gone from his home in Winnebago, Illinois, for his health. He was employed as a supply, being junior preacher on the Dubuque Circuit.

His health not improving there, he went to Texas in 1854, partly in search of health, but seeing in the Church papers, Dr. Goode's call for young men, he reported to the superintendent in May, 1855, and was among the first to be assigned a charge by that great leader, being sent to what was called Wolf Creek, in northern Kansas, extending west of St. Joseph, Missouri. That fall he was received on trial in the Iowa Conference and though appointed to Brownville, was, as before noted, changed to Nebraska City, and began that long and useful career in Nebraska, which lacks but a single year of being half a century in duration.

Brother Burch, though not having been advanced to the higher official positions in the Church, has been one of those steady, reliable, efficient workers who have a way of bringing things to pass.

He served York College as financial agent, and at a critical time in the history of Nebraska Wesleyan, rendered valuable service in the same relation in turning the York patrons to that institution.

He was united in marriage with Miss Mary Brisbin, October 11, 1855. They are living in University Place, respected and honored by all.

John Gallagher appears in the Minutes for the first time thirty-two years ago, at the Conference of 1872, where he is received on trial and appointed junior preacher on the Mt. Pleasant Circuit. It is to his advantage, that, like J. H. Presson, he has A. L. Folden for the senior preacher.

Brother Gallagher has been a close student from the beginning of his ministry, this studiousness not ceasing or even diminishing after he had finished his Conference

course of study. He soon took up the course for the degree of Ph. D., which was conferred on him, after examination. This degree may sometimes represent more of solid learning than the honorary degree of D. D.

But John Gallagher's standing in the Conference and the Church does not depend upon his degree, but upon his real ability as a preacher and his thoroughness as an administrator of the interests committed to him. He has been pastor of a number of important charges, among them Ashland, Weeping Water, Plattsmouth, Falls City, Tecumseh, Falls City a second time, Fairbury, Auburn, Seward, and Aurora, his present charge.

In 1883 he was placed in charge of Hastings District. For several years he was secretary of the Nebraska Conference and was reserve delegate to the General Conference in 1900, and delegate in 1904. He has for several years been the efficient secretary of the Nebraska Conference Historical Society, and has aided the writer by the material his diligence has secured. He is now recording secretary of the Methodist Historical Society of Nebraska.

Among those who came into the work in the later sixties was F. M. Esterbrook, who was received on trial in 1869. He has been one of the most useful pastors we have had, usually getting hold of his people so strongly that they very often kept him the full legal term. F. M. Esterbrook belonged to the class who, while doing much of the real work, reporting gains on every pastoral charge served, do not attain to the same prominence that others do who have done no more, or perhaps not as much. But with scarcely a break, this man has moved steadily on in the "even tenor of his way" for over a third of a

century, cheerfully doing the work assigned him, always successful in some direction and to some extent, and sometimes blessed with great revivals. At Peru, his first charge in Nebraska, there were eighty conversions. The next year, 1869, he was received on trial and sent to West Point, where he finds seven members, and after three years' service reports over eighty. He was popular, and everybody believed in Francis M. Esterbrook.

When, after the shameful abuse of their confidence by C. M. Ellinwood, the Board of Trustees of Wesleyan University felt that they must find a man for treasurer whom everybody could trust, selected Esterbrook and no words of mine could more clearly set forth the sterling worth of this man of God than this expression of confidence. He was retained in that position for several years, and would probably have been there yet but for the change of plan that took place when Dr. G. W. Isham was elected field secretary, and it was deemed best to combine the two offices in the interests of economy.

The spirit of this man is shown in these words contained in a letter to the writer: "Thirty-five years seems a short time to work for my Master, but they have been filled with much sunshine, for truly the 'darkest cloud has a silver lining.' Do you ask me, have I regrets? Yes, and no. I regret that I have not done more for His cause: I see where I could have greatly improved if I had known all that I know now, but I have this comfort, that I did the best I could with the light I then had."

Joseph Hile Presson was born in Ohio, and at an early age was taken by his parents to Illinois, where they resided a number of years. He was converted at a meeting held by his father, Harrison Presson. He enlisted

in Company A, Fifty-fifth Regiment, Illinois Volunteer Infantry, and gave over three years to the service of his country, holding the responsible position of quartermaster's sergeant. He was in the battles of Shiloh, Corinth, Chickasaw Bayou, Champion Hills, Black River, Siege of Vicksburg, and Jackson, then marched from Memphis to Chattanooga, he was in battles of Missionary Ridge, Altoona, Big Shanta, Kenesaw Mountain, and also the battle around Atlanta. He was mustered out on the 30th day of September, 1864, and on the 23d of December, of the same year, landed in Tecumseh, Nebraska, traveling from St. Joseph in a lumber wagon, a distance of 110 miles.

Joseph H. Presson's ministerial career began in Nebraska as early as 1867, when he was licensed to preach and recommended for admission into the traveling connection. He was, however, closing his first term as county clerk of Johnson County, and had consented to be a candidate for re-election, and felt under obligation to do so, and requested that his name be not presented at that Conference.

At the close of his second term as county clerk he was appointed junior preacher under A. L. Folden. Two years before Folden had received him and the woman who was to become his wife, into the Church on probation, and gave the promising young man license to exhort. Now this eminently successful preacher is to give Joseph H. Presson his first lessons in preaching the Gospel. They together traveled Tecumseh Circuit. They must travel 135 miles to reach all the eleven following appointments: Tecumseh, Sterling, Adams, Elk Creek, Crab Orchard, Vesta, Upper Spring Creek, Lower Spring

Creek, Illinois Settlement, Blodgets School-house, and Hooker Creek. To-day there are eleven charges on the same ground. During the winter of that year they received 111 probationers. At the next Annual Conference, held in the spring of 1870, he was received on trial and returned for the same work as junior preacher under A. L. Folden. Success attended the work and during that year the first church in Johnson County was built in Tecumseh. Brother Folden being a carpenter, did, with the help of his colleague, most of the work.

For a third of a century, J. H. Presson has efficiently wrought in the Gospel ministry in Nebraska, being blessed at times with great revivals, and in every charge advancing the interest of the Church. He is popular in Church and G. A. R. circles, and was elected chaplain of the House of Representatives of the Nebraska Legislature in 1901, and of the Senate in 1903. He is still in his later prime and on his fourth year as pastor at Milford.

Among the local preachers who have done splendid service were Robert Laing and John Dale.

It was Robert Laing that in 1868 welcomed H. T. Davis to Nebraska, and it was in the Laing cabin in Sarpy County, that Davis preached his first sermon in Nebraska and began a ministry that was to continue forty-four years and be of untold blessing to thousands. Though remaining in the local ranks almost as long, Brother Laing has been serving the Church as local preacher and evangelist, and in the thirty-five years or more he has almost constantly given to the work, he estimated that not less than 10,000 souls have been saved.

He was a very forceful preacher, tactful in managing a revival-meeting, could sing or pray or preach as occasion required.

Haynes speaks thus of this successful local preacher: "Many of the protracted-meetings he conducted were continued from two to four weeks, each, and it has been estimated that an average of fifty had been converted each seven days. He claims not that such results were reached by his might or power, but by the Spirit of God. He ascribes as a great means of success his method of Bible reading. One interested person said to him, 'Brother Laing, I wish you would bequeath to me that Bible of yours; I never heard such a Bible read before.' He insists upon the reading of the Word of God attentively, studiously, that there may be cultivated in the heart a deepening desire for a closer walk with God."

Though not a member of the Conference, his brethren in regular work, many of whom he has helped, express their appreciation in the following memoir: "Rev. Robert Laing, a deacon in our local ranks, did efficient service in our Church for about forty years in this State, he being one of the earliest settlers in Nebraska. He departed this life full of faith in the saving power of God to the uttermost, aged sixty-nine years. He was a revivalist of great power; many pastors can testify to his valuable evangelistic services in their pastoral charges."

Sister Laing, to whom Robert Laing was married in 1854, and her father, have the distinction of being the first two persons who brought Church letters to Council Bluffs in 1852. They became members of the first Church formed in that place, by William Simpson.

John Dale, another helpful local preacher, though a man of business, finds time, or takes time, to do the Lord's work. We have seen the prominent part he took in the founding and development of Hanscom Park Church.

But he has been very helpful in many ways, in connection with the hospital and other enterprises, and every struggling Church has had a sympathetic, helpful friend in John Dale, and Omaha Methodism in general is in debt to him for years of efficient service.

I have already in the course of this narrative spoken at some length of many others of our local brethren, gratefully recognizing their valuable services to the Church. All honor to the class of workers to which they belong, a class that has done much to make the history that I have been trying to record.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

FOURTH PERIOD. (1880-1904.)

CONCLUSION.

THE following bishops have presided at the Nebraska Conferences during these fifty years: Morris, Simpson, Ames, Baker, Scott, Kingsley, Thomson, Janes, Clark, Andrews, Bowman, Gilbert Haven, Foster, Harris, Warren, Merrill, Wiley, Mallalieu, Fowler, Hurst, Foss, Vincent, Goodsell, Walden, Newman, McCabe, Ninde, Fitz-Gerald.

Of these twenty-eight bishops there are none whose presence has not been influential for good. The very presence of these chief pastors has been a benediction to all, and especially to the younger members. These bishops have all been men of good ability, and by their addresses and counsel during Conference sessions, and the sermon on the Sabbath have made a deep impression for good. Under no other system do the people and preachers have the privilege of meeting and hearing from so many of the chief men of the Church. Some of these sermons have been the event of a lifetime with some of these preachers, as was that of Bishop Foster at Falls City in 1876, which, after more than a quarter of a century, is still fresh in the memory of those of us who were permitted to hear it.

It may be said that these have all been men of great

personal power and influence. But when you add to this the vast official power with which the Church has clothed them, by which they have the entire legal authority to determine the appointment of every member of Conference, and also those on trial, you have a factor that can not but be a power for good if wisely and conscientiously used. Though our bishops may be fallible and make mistakes, they have no motive for using this vast power otherwise than in the interest of the Church.

At the four Nebraska Conferences of 1903 Bishop Andrews, in the exercise of this power, assigned over 350 men to different places and positions. If we take 150, less than half this number, as the average number thus appointed from year to year by the several presiding bishops, we have a total for the fifty years of 7,500 appointments made by these bishops, chiefly to pastorates and presiding elderships.

How much of the success of these fifty years has been due to the wisdom and spirit in which these appointments have been made may not be in our power to determine. That much is due to this cause can not be doubted.

Besides these regular services at the Conferences many of these bishops have aided on special occasions in dedicating churches, delivering lectures, and other like services. Two of them, Newman and McCabe, have been resident bishops in Omaha, and have been specially helpful to the Churches in that city and others throughout the State. As elsewhere noted, Bishop Fowler may be said to be the father of our present educational institution and the splendid service of Bishop McCabe in helping to rescue that institution from the burden of debt will not soon be forgotten.

MINISTERIAL DELEGATES TO GENERAL CONFERENCE.

1. William Gorst. 2. W. B. Alexander. 3. John Gallagher. 4. P. C. Johnson. 5. C. A. Mastin. 6. W. E. Hardaway. Wm. M. Worley. 8. L. F. Britt. 9. J. W. Stewart.

Nebraska Methodism will bear the test of comparison with other sister Churches. For this purpose I have chosen the United States census religious statistics for 1870 and 1890. I have chosen these two dates because this feature of the census does not appear before 1870, and those for 1900 are not out yet. But as these cover the period of greatest growth in population and consequent need, and during the eighties, the greatest opportunities for church-building and expansion in all directions, the comparison for that period will serve as a sample of what has been done during all periods of Nebraska history.

The three items with which the census deals are the number of organizations, the number of churches, and the number of sittings these churches afford. Here Methodism is at a disadvantage in 1870 by reason of the fact that under our economy in our circuit system there are sometimes from two to five separate organizations combined in one and so reported, while with all the other denominations included in this comparison each such organization is counted separately and so reported. So we should remember in reading these figures that to get at the real facts we should multiply the number of our organizations in 1870 by three. But in 1890 the number 649 indicates that the census report conforms to the facts. The above caution, of course, does not apply to churches and sittings.

Churches.	Date.	Organizations.	Edifices.	Sittings.
Methodists, ...	1870	50	36	10,150
Baptists, ...	1870	26	15	5,400
Presbyterians, ...	1870	24	9	3,125
Congregationalists, . . .	1870	10	7	2,050
Lutherans, ...	1870	14	7	2,000

Churches.	Date.	Organizations.	Edifices.	Sittings.
Episcopalians, ...	1870	15	12	3,500
Catholics, ...	1870	17	11	2,935
Methodists, ...	1890	649	461	112,000
Baptists, ...	1890	230	164	36,500
Presbyterians, ...	1890	228	155	34,900
Congregationalists, . .	1890	172	144	32,000
Lutherans, ...	1890	387	253	49,900
Catholics, ...	1890	213	179	38,390

This story of the fifty years of Methodism will properly close with a brief summary of results and a glance at some of the causes of the success that is written on every page.

These results may be divided into two classes, the visible and the invisible. (Note that all previous statistics, except German and Swedish, and those which follow, relate to our English-speaking work alone, the German-Swedish occurring elsewhere.)

During the fifty years Nebraska Methodism has received from the Missionary Society to aid in supporting the men in the field the sum of $430,802. This was often the chief reliance of the frontier preacher, the one thing on which he could bank. Not infrequently it amounted to much more than the people were able to pay, and its absence would have meant suffering if not starvation.

To support her ministry during the entire fifty years Nebraska Methodism has promised, including salaries and house rent, a total of $4,817,420, and has paid a total of $4,367,283. This leaves her still in debt, according to ordinary standards, to her ministers that have actually done her service these fifty years, to the amount of $450,137. It will be easy to reckon how far this would go if paid

now to producing the $100,000 Conference Claimants' Fund proposed during this, her jubilee year. There should, however, be deducted from this balance still due the amount given to Conference claimants in fifty years, being $34,460. That still leaves us short in our account with the old veterans to the amount of $415,677.

It is true that much of this deficit accrued during the first twenty-five years, before financial conditions became favorable and the Church became thoroughly organized so as to handle her financial affairs efficiently.

Of the $430,802 received from the Missionary Society in fifty years $285,283 have been returned by collections during that time. This leaves us $145,519 behind in our account with the Missionary Society.

To the several other benevolent interests we have contributed during the half-century, or during the time they have been in existence, as follows: For Church Extension, $42,204; Freedmen's Aid, $40,189; Tract, $5,619; Sunday-school Union, $6,434; Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, $77,332; Woman's Home Missionary Society, $52,752; Education, public collection, $134,230; Children's-day Fund, $12,955; Bible Society, $9,869; Methodist Hospital, $10,786.

The total contributed to all the benevolences, not including Conference Claimants, General Conference expenses, Episcopal Fund, or "other" collections, $660,421.

While doing this and paying preachers we have built 574 churches, at a cost of $1,592,955, and 321 parsonages, at a cost of $330,525, besides the second and third churches and parsonages that have been erected in many places.

While in the statistical tables the Conference Claim-

MINISTERIAL DELEGATES TO GENERAL CONFERENCE.

1. F. M. Sisson. 2. Geo. I. Wright. 3. J. W. Shenk. 4. P. H. Eighmy.
5. James Leonard. 6. D. K. Tindall. 7. Jesse W. Jennings.
8. C. A. Hale. 9. Alfred Hodgetts. 10. C. C. Lasby.
11. A. R. Julian. 12. A. C. Crosthwaite.

ants' and Episcopal Funds, and the collection for General Conference expenses are included in the benevolences for convenience, neither of them are properly there, as their support is not a benevolence.

These figures include only the Conference collections, and do not embrace all the amounts raised by subscriptions for college and seminary buildings, hospital, and other such institutions, though in a few cases some of these may have been reported.

While these statistics for the entire period of fifty years have been carefully compiled, and we have reason to believe are substantially correct, they are not absolutely so. There are occasional errors in the Minutes as published, and there is no way of correcting them. But these errors are of such a nature that they are as likely to occur on one side as another, and in the course of fifty years tend to balance each other.

It should be further explained that nearly all the benevolences have begun their existence since the beginning of Nebraska Methodism. This is true of Freedmen's Aid, which began after the war; Church Extension began in the later sixties; Woman's Foreign Missionary Society began in 1869, and Woman's Home Missionary Society in 1880. We had no institution of learning till 1880. Missions and Bible Cause were about all there were at the first. So with the exception of Missions and Bible Cause, Tract, and Sunday-school work, these contributions for benevolences have all been made in the last twenty-five or thirty years.

At the close of our half-century we find ourselves with 393 full members of Conference and forty-three on trial. Of these, twenty-three are supernumerary and fifty-nine

LAY DELEGATES TO THE GENERAL CONFERENCE.

1. Bayard H. Paine. 2. George H. Hornby. 3. L. S. Feigenbaum. 4. M. C. Hazen. 5. Wm. W. Haskell. 6. John N. Dryden. 7. W. H. Westover. 8. John A. Slater. 9. S. A. D. Henline. 10. John Davis. 11. A. J. Anderson. 12. W. G. Olinger. 13. John J. Doty. 14. F. E. Sala. 15. John Dale. 16. E. H. Rogers.

superannuated. This leaves 311 effective, of whom fourteen are presiding elders, and forty are missionaries to the Territories or to foreign fields, or in some other special service, as Conference evangelists, or attending school. This leaves 257 effective preachers as pastors.

We have, according to the Minutes of 1903, 51,697 full members, and 3,354 probationers. These are divided into 399 different charges, with 257 effective members of Conference to man them, leaving 142 charges to be supplied otherwise. This is largely done with our reserve force of 158 local preachers, many of whom are in this way being tested before being presented to Conference for admission on trial. A few charges are supplied by supernumerary preachers, and some even by the superannuated.

There are very few of our 574 church buildings in which there is not at least one Gospel sermon preached each Sabbath, and in nearly all there are two sermons preached. It would not be far from the truth to say that there are 1,000 sermons preached in Nebraska by Methodist preachers every Sabbath day at the regular services, or 52,000 in the course of the year. Besides these there are probably not less than 5,000 preached at revivals and camp-meetings.

In the 690 Methodist Sunday-schools in the State there are not less than 3,000 teachers giving lessons every Sabbath from the Divine Word of God. If this is what Methodism is now doing in a single year, what a magnificent aggregate of earnest, efficient effort must the entire half-century present!

Add to these the means of grace as found in the prayer and class meeting, and Epworth League devotional meet-

LAY DELEGATES TO THE GENERAL CONFERENCE.

1. J. D. King. 2. Mrs. M. D. Nickell. 3. A. F. Coon. 4. M. B. Rees. 5. Mrs. M. E. Roberts. 6. J. L. McBrien. 7. D. C. Fleming. 8. Mrs. Angie F. Newman. 9. B. L. Paine. 10. John W. Balson. 11. N. R. Persinger. 12. Chas. A. Goss.

ings, and we have some idea of the visible means by which Methodism has been and is now trying to do her part in evangelizing the State, saving souls, and helping to make the world better.

Some of the results of all these sermons, lessons, prayer and class meetings, together with her revivals, schools, hospitals, and other forms of Christian effort and helpful institutions, we have been able to place before the eye in tangible form.

But perhaps the best and most lasting results are the invisible. The truth lodged in the heart and growing secretly, bearing the rich fruitage of pure thoughts, high resolves, noble purposes, and these ultimating in strong clean character and noble living. The word of sympathy that has inspired the wavering soul with new courage, brought hope to the despairing and stanched the tears of sorrow are results incapable of expression in language or statistics and must await the eternities for their full expression.

Many of the agencies that brought about much of these results, both visible and invisible, have themselves been obscure ministers and laymen who have wrought for years with little or no recognition. It has been my purpose to bring to light as many of their achievements as possible, but I have found it impossible to do justice to all. But among these are to be found some of our choicest spirits, our noblest heroes. Their lot is well described by Dean Farrar in these true words: "There is yet a harder and a higher heroism—to live well in the quiet routine of life; to fill a little space because God wills it; to go on cheerfully with a petty round of little duties, little occasions; to accept unmurmuringly a low position; to smile

for the joys of others when the heart is aching; to banish all ambition, all pride, all restlessness in a single regard for our Savior's work. To do this for a lifetime is a greater effort, and he who does this is a greater hero than he who for one hour storms a breach, or for one day rushes undaunted in the flaming front of shot and shell. His works will follow him. He may not be a hero to the world, but he is one of God's heroes; and, though the builders of Nineveh and Babylon be forgotten and unknown, his memory shall live and be blessed."

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